

SECRETS FROM THE PROS: 44 KITCHEN DESIGN TIPS

This Old House

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2005

3 WARM RE-DOS

- ▶ A cozy home for mom
- ▶ A farmhouse for the family
- ▶ A cottage for a couple

RAZE OR RENOVATE?

A 5-point checklist

SHOWCASE STAIRS
6 Styles That'll
Transform Your Home

THE
OOPS!
TOOL
that every
homeowner
needs

THE
\$200
REMODEL
Crown a
room with
molding

DESIGN
DISCOVERY
See-thru
concrete

THISOLDHOUSE.COM AOL KEYWORD: THISOLDHOUSE

In 1970, when over-the-air television programs were considered revolutionary, *This Old House* featured its first project—a dilapidated 1850 Victorian located in Dorchester. At the end of many months of extensive renovation, a fresh coat of paint revived the stately home and helped launch a television genre.

Fast forward to 2005. This Old House and manufacturing partner ICI Plants now are launching super-premium branded paints. To celebrate the concurrent launch and the 20th anniversary of This Old House, show representatives contacted

The owner of The Lancaster House to repair the home. As she recalls, the offer met both practical and aesthetic needs. "Our region's fierce Nor'easters with their strong, driving winds and sheets of ice really can impact a home's exterior. We certainly were blessed there was something available that not only helped preserve the home's original appearance, but would withstand the elements."

Truly the only paint worthy of carrying the *The Old House* brand name, *The Old House* exterior paint was developed using a special technology that creates a flexible, protective barrier to resist premature chipping.

and cracking from harsh weather conditions. This *Old House* exterior paint is formulated with the perfect blend of SmoothCoat® modifiers, which allow the paint to smooth out evenly when you

apply it and provide back over-cost coverage. Providing a coating particularly resistant to mildew and backed by a limited lifetime warranty, *The Old House* exterior paint can be tinted to 320 rich colors and provides true beautification with lasting protection for years to come.

The color selection process was crucial to the project's success. Color experts from KCI Paints worked with the homeowners, representatives from the *The Old House* team and experts from the Cambridge Historical Commission to ensure both aesthetics and historical accuracy.

and doors, with a Special Blue formulation featured on the porch ceiling. "This paint covers so well, if not better, than any high-end paint I've used. The color quality is very true and the spreadability is great," says Brian Murphy of GPM Painters and Home Renovators, the Quincy, Mass., painting contractor that handled the job. "These older homes require high-quality durable paint in order to ensure long-lasting results. I'd certainly recommend The Old House paint to any one of my customers."

"In the end, there was symmetry between old and new," says the homeowner when describing the home's revised appearance. "The house looked great, plus its uniqueness and sense of history were enhanced."

It's the mixture of honoring the past while embracing the future that has enabled *This Old House* to remain revolutionary, from the outside in, for the past 25 years.

And with the launch of *This Old House* plant, homeowners across the country also can choose from the wide variety of colors perfect for their own *This Old House* simply by visiting a local KCI Plants store or a dealer of fine plants in your area beginning in February.

For ordering information on *This Old House* paint as well as available how-to guides, please call 1-800-TCH-4544 or visit www.thisoldhousepaint.com



Offering a color scheme that is true to tradition as well as the future, The Old House paint palette allowed the homeowner to brighten her home's look with a range of options. Repainting by BFM Painters and Mosaic Restoration, Quincy, Mass., (617) 472-3343.

The *Three Old Houses* paint palette allowed the homeowners to brighten her home's look with a range of options. Rockefeller Beige was chosen for the trim while Tavern Green was painted on the shutters.

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BARN IN (P)A TOWN

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ON THE COVER

The home that's burning in the living room of this new three-story timber house. See "Barn Again" page 94.


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COVER PHOTO BY JOE EDWARDS
STYLING BY GENE WILLIAMS

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YOU SHOULD SEE WHAT'S ON



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DATE _____

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GETTING IT WRIGHT

I really enjoyed your article on the Frank Lloyd Wright "Usonian" home (November 2004), especially since my husband and I had just visited the only Usonian in Oregon, at the Oregon Garden in Silverton. We discovered how the design came to be known as "Usonian." It seems that when Wright was traveling in Europe in 1910 and was asked where he was from had replied, "USA," which was often misinterpreted to mean Union of South Africa. So he began to refer to his home as the United States of North America, or USONIA, and the houses he designed for this reason then took on the name Usonian. Add a little extra interest to an already fascinating architectural design, don't you think?

ELLEN ROBERTS, HOSMER COUNTY, GA

THE EDITORS REPLY: There are several stories about how Wright came up with the term, including one that claims he took it from the 19th-century utopian writer Robert Owen (though no one has been able to find it in Owen's writings). What is clear is that he intended it to mark an architecture that was uniquely North American, not derived from European or other traditions.

SHARPLY PLANNING

In Norm's Notebook, November 2004, Norm said he really keeps a schedule of wishes and measurements when he does a project. Well, I've been doing that—in a slightly different way—for years. Anytime I open a wall in my house, I take a roll of photos of it. I also take a disappearing tape to the wall first. To allow for future wiring I also drill a 1/8-inch hole in the top and bottom plates and hang a string between them, with a coat hanger bent into a hook through the attic duct. Future alterations become a snap! I take out the photos every five years and know exactly where all the beams, pipes, and strings are. (See Planning, November Plus, N.J.)

OPEN OR CLOSED?

The From the Ground up article on insulation (November 2004) was of particular interest to



me. Over one week, I received two quotes on foam insulation. The first salesman could say no wrong about the "open-cell" foam-gelcoat, and the second salesman said the "closed-cell" product was the only one better. Can you shed some light on this?

DEBBY GOSWAMI, CHANLOTTE, NC

THE EDITORS REPLY: Both are great products in the right application. FOAM general contractor Tom Smith's rule of thumb is the optimal foam with wood framing above grade because it's flexible and vapor permeable. If anything gets wet it can dry out. Closed-cell is rigid and more impermeable, so it's better for below-grade use on masonry and concrete.

SECURE TRADES

The October issue mentions several times the shortage of people entering the trades. Over the past years I have watched American jobs change as they are increasingly outsourced overseas. Even here, any job that requires spending 40 hours at a desk may be at risk. Some of the jobs in the future with the greatest degree of security will be those in the trades. I think it is safe to say that building a house, installing a sink, or planting a tree will not be able to be outsourced to India, China, or Taiwan in the foreseeable future.

DAVIDA PERIN, HILLSBOROUGH, N.J.

TOEMAIL-LESS BLOCKINGS

I have wondered, whether with a hammer or a nail gun, and would offer an addition to Norm's suggestion (Norm's Notebook, October 2004), a trick that lets you nail straight through the studs into the ends of the blocking. Simply cut two different widths of blocking (2x4 and 2x6), alternating sizes between the studs and centering them for whatever will be hung on the wall (cabinet, sink, or towel bar). First, nail the smaller-dimension piece between studs in every other bay, and then fill in with the larger-dimension pieces.

AND GARDNER, BURNING, MO

FUTURE-EQUITY FINANCING

I wanted to clarify a point you make in "Should You Buy That Hot Copper?" (October 2004). The problem with the loan programs you mention is that, at least with my wife's company (she works for a large national mortgage lender), you CANNOT borrow against future equity without using a co-borrower to do the work. So, for those of us who want to "roll up our sleeves" as you suggest, it isn't always easy to find financing.

COO FERR, HAVEN, PA; W. VA.

THE EDITORS REPLY: She's around to see if you can find FHA 203(k) mortgages. These FHA-insured loans allow you to refinance your first mortgage and combine it with the improvement costs into a new loan. The good news is you can do the work yourself or hire a contractor. The downside: Lender limits vary by location and tend to be relatively low.

punch list

Definition: a list of how incorrectly done or remaining to be finished on a construction job.

• In the October 2004 Quarterly we ran together the results for the Builders' Design and the Cold Weather on the Coast. To project, Northville's best builder, designer Kathy Marshall is at Marshall Design, 5 Marshall, PA, www.marshalldesign.com, (814) 469-7795.

Accompanied by Letters, this page invites magazine readers to share their thoughts, ideas, and questions. We'll publish your letters, comments, and questions on a regular basis. We'll also publish your letters, comments, and questions on a regular basis. We'll publish your letters, comments, and questions on a regular basis.

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GETTING AWAY FROM THE MESS

Some advice on escaping the stress of a renovation from TOH TV host Kevin O'Connor

I

ll let you in on a secret if you promise not to tell the other guys. When you're renovating your whole house, you don't have to make everything perfect right away, and you don't always have to finish what you start. It now sounds like blagony—and right now Tom, Richard, Norm, and Roger are probably voting me off the show—but it's true. Living through a renovation is a bit like surviving in the wilderness. You take it one day at a time and you do what you have to do to get by.

For most of us amateurs it's tough to coordinate contractors or to work late into the night after a long day at the office. I find one of the best ways to relieve the stress of managing a messy, down-out renovation is to create a refuge, a place that is always clean and comfortable. My wife and I decided it would be a 600-square-foot corner of our house that holds the kitchen, the family room, and a bedroom. It took some time to get them into shape. But now, while everything else is being torn apart and put back together again, these three rooms are a place to make a meal, to sit and relax, and to get some well-deserved sleep. This is our sanctuary.

Don't worry if your own refuge isn't perfect, and don't be afraid to spend a little time and money on this temporary haven. Our concrete bedroom will eventually be a den, but we still stripped the wallpaper, patched the plaster, and rolled on a coat of paint knowing full well that our hard work would be undone to make way for built-in bookcases, a window seat, and recessed lights. In the meantime, however, the bedroom is a perfect place to kick back every evening to relax sometimes—and to fret about the remodeling other rooms.

And for those of you who worry that the show's resident amateur is lowering the over-high standards on *This Old House*, fear not. I join my colleagues in their respect for the finest craftsmanship and in their pursuit of excellence. All I'm suggesting is that most people are not renovating superheroes like Tom and the gang. Perfection takes time. After all, you have to remove a renovation in order to complete it. ■



LIVING THROUGH A RENOVATION IS LIKE SURVIVING IN THE WILDERNESS—YOU DO WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO TO GET BY

IN THE NEXT THIS OLD HOUSE

- How to buy your own town
- Luxuries: Add polish to wood floors with medallion inlays
- The coolest cordless tools
- How to light your kitchen countertops

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ON THE JOB

Concrete With a Twist

Remember the kids' game you used to play? Would you rather be able to fly or be invisible? Do you want super strength or X-ray vision? Back then it was just a game. But one day soon you'll be able to see through walls. Or at least walls made of UltraCon. The branch of Hungarian architect Áron Losonczy, UltraCon consists of concrete that's been laced with long glass fibers. The substance is formed into blocks or panels, and the result is something of a transparency that, depending on the way the fibers are oriented, can show more or less of what goes on behind or beneath. Though the product is still undergoing some development, UltraCon's maker says it's strong enough to carry structural loads. While that claim is still being tested, the innovative concrete will surely come to market, if only as a kind of curious shade for a wall or floor lamp. Meanwhile, be forewarned: Special powers don't come cheap. The prototype blocks being tested in Europe cost about \$61,000 per cubic meter; standard concrete costs about \$68. —Charlie Wardell

For further information, go to www.ultracon.com



See-thru concrete is on exhibit at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C., until April 12.

Concrete Facts



ANCIENT CIVILIZATIONS

To build the Colosseum and Pantheon, the Romans mixed fine volcanic ash with water and lime and blended in some animal fat, milk, and blood to hold the whole mess together. Concrete was born.



THE MODERN RECIPE

One part cement, two parts sand, three parts gravel, and a half part water.



GO FIGURE

A new two-story home boasts about 55 cubic yards of concrete. At the turn of the century just 25 cubic yards held a house in place. —C.J. Richter

READING UNDER PRESSURE

Keeping your home-improvement and decorating books—and, of course, back issues of *ENR*—upright and organized isn't always easy. Which is why it's used to have a handy tool to do it for you, like the sharp but appropriately sinister-as-the-backyard Made of cast iron, they're solid, well proportioned, and heavy. Adjustable clasp and wood handles allow modules to be placed in rows of books. And the circular pieces are built so they're unlikely to damage the cover of your copy of the *McGraw-Hill Field Guide to American Houses*. —C.J. Hughes

The bookends cost \$40 and are available at www.crowfoot.com/learn.com



FULL OF HOT AIR

If you're shoveling snow or heated forward in January without gloves, you know how uncomfortable that air on your hands can be. It's a different story if you're wearing gloves like the *Envirolite* and *Envirolite* from *Envirolite*. They're made of a special material that's as sturdy as the leather of a horse, and in their chamber sends the heat all around your hands and fingers. How cool—and warm—is that? And the stretchy material and suede knuckle guards are sturdy enough to handle whatever job like chipping, freemasonry, flexible enough to tap your foot against a wall when you've worked up some steam. The pair is \$34.99 from www.envirolite.com

—Scott Schilling



[FINANCE]

PERK-PACKED MORTGAGES

With interest rates dropping, mortgage lenders are offering incentives to continue to attract borrowers, including reduced loan fees, some small chunk of money for a family's college-education costs, free hotel stays, or even frequent-flyer miles. For instance, a homeowner who borrows \$300,000 from certain lenders—including Chase, Washington Mutual, Citimortgage, and Wachovia—can claim 15,000 miles on Alaska Airlines, American West, Continental, Delta, United, or US Airways frequent-flyer programs or \$750 (0.25 percent of the loan amount) in Scholastic Rewards toward his or her child's education. To be eligible, register online at www.rewardsformortgage.anchormortgage.com or call 1-866-503-5573. Even larger savings can be had from incentives that reduce or eliminate loan closing costs. Just make sure such freeloader don't come with a higher interest rate. "Even a variation of one-eighth of a percent can add up over the course of a 30-year loan," says Terry Light, president of RealEstateAOL, a Website for home buyers and sellers. —Jeff Bartels

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[TOD TIP]

A Sharper Image

Calling all do-it-yourselfers: If you want to take the sharp, clear color photos that could get your house, new master suite, top-of-the-line kitchen or other completed project into the pages of TDW, here's what to do:

•**Lighting:** Make sure the whole house is in the frame, and shoot in daylight.

•**Angles:** Include as much of the room as you can in the frame, and be sure the room is well lit.

•**Details:** For a cool feature you want us to see—from a hand-sawed post column to the fancy sleekwork of a kitchen backsplash, snap a close-up of it—and don't use a flash, which can "white out" some of the detail.

•**Submissions:** Digital images need to be 300 dpi, sent as a .JPG or .TIF file. 35mm prints should be clear and the color true. Also include a "before" picture so that we can see—and appreciate—the full scope of your work.

And here are two new cameras that make taking those kinds of images a snap.

—Scott Schilling



Panasonic's D-view gives you a choice of high-res digital pictures or video display and the built-in zoom is handy for room-to-room commentary. \$399. www.panasonic.com



Door prices range from \$333 for a 3-1/2x4-1/2-ft. 6R model with a half-chalkboard pane (left) to \$545 for a 3-1/2x4-1/2-ft. chessy door with a full-length chalkboard. www.homedepot.com



Nikon's Coolpix 9500 takes eye-popping 5-megapixel digital shots and has a wide-angle feature to focus (and fill the frame) the full scope of your work. \$599. www.nikonusa.com

E-mail digital images to TDW, letters@timeinc.com, or mail submissions to: The Old House (TM), 885 Avenue of the Americas, 27th Floor, New York, NY 10013

GOOD HOMES FOR OLD TOOLS

Does the time-honored Go With the Tools contest tool kit you just got as a holiday gift melt in your old DIY kit obsessions? Well, then, it's time to give a gift or return it—instead of adding your used screw gun, drill, saw, or other tool to the bin. American Home & Garden, now in its fifth year of home-up properties for low-income families. Such generosity is a good thing, and donations are low deductible—while they may even save you enough to hire a handyman to do your chores.

Carried Air or Please at 800-417-4572, for a list of medical supplies, go to www.americanhomeup.org.



Luxury Workshops

The garage. For most car owners it's either a place of chaos (the wheels, the bikes, a jumble of power tools) or a well-oiled refuge (bikes and bins neatly basking in the sun and holes of homeownership). One thing the garage has never been is a kitchen. Or a busy room. Until now, that is. Building on the DIY organizing solutions Glaxo GarageWorks started a few years ago, the company, and others like it (The Garage People, RedBelt, and RedBelt's Garage), have now hung up for customer-made solutions, including TVs, custom shelving, climate control, and even beer taps. It's all pretty cool if you can come up with the cash (a typical outfit can cost as much as a kitchen remodel). But if you do have the budget, go easy: You most definitely do not want to tap on the beer tap until clear you're done with the crafter row. That could have the garage into something of a first aid kit.

For more information contact www.garageworks.com, www.redbeltheadbels.com, www.thegaragepeople.com, or www.redbeltheadbels.com.



TAKE OUR WISDOM, PLEASE

There's a DVD we think you should buy: It's not *Peewee's Big Adventure*. It's a four-disc collection of the first season of the *Ask The Old House* TV program. In its 26 episodes TDW experts visit homeowners to offer their know-how along with suggestions for tools and materials on more than 60 projects and issues that no contractor would want to be bothered with but that can be mastered by any handy person (that's you) with just a little advice.

The latest DVD set, shown at left, comes with extra home-improvement tips, and is available at kbbstore.com for \$49.95.

[UPDATE]

Risky Building

When wood and nails don't mix

Pressure-treated lumber has had a troubled history. First it was coated with arsenic, which led manufacturers to pull wood processed with chromated-copper arsenate (CCA) off the market. Now the chemicals they substituted, if not toxic, are awfully tough on the hardware that keeps lumber bound together.

The CCA replacements—arsenic copper quaternary (ACQ) and copper azole (CA)—get their preservative power from high levels of copper. That works off not just insects, but when paired with the deck screws, post brackets, and flashing that used to be okay with CCA-treated lumber it also creates a corrosive reaction akin to a leaky battery (see left).

For treatment resiliency, use stainless steel fasteners and connectors. The next best thing is hot-dipped galvanized steel with an extra-thick coating of zinc. Only use copper flashing, which is oxidized by copper-based preservatives. And don't use dissimilar metals, which accelerate corrosion (for example, use stainless steel hangers with stainless post hangers). You'll pay more, but consider it a cheap insurance policy.

—Amy Hughes

A three-month study revealed the corrosion of a common carbon steel/nail exposed to ACQ-treated lumber.

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Fixing the Flow

A cramped kitchen gained space with a layout made for cooking and entertaining.

BY BOBBIK DURLIN PHOTOGRAPHY BY EMMY SELL

Lorraine and Greg Domonowski knew just what they wanted in a new kitchen, exactly the opposite of what they had. Dark wood cabinets and a dropped ceiling with recessed fluorescent lighting were the design highlights of the crowded-in-the-70s kitchen that came with their River Forest, Illinois, home. "Our house is a 1929 Tudor with high ceilings and lovely arched doorways," says Lorraine, an interior designer. "The kitchen was a total mess." The 12-by-13-foot space not only had depressing doors, it was boxed in by a peninsula that jutting way out into the room. "It was impossible to cook in, let alone entertain in," she says.

To create a more functional kitchen complete with an island and professional-grade appliances, the couple enlisted the help of local kitchen designer Mark Messia. His first move was to enlarge the room by incorporating two adjacent spaces: the breakfast area and the butler's pantry. Lorraine then suggested removing the dropped ceiling and using wooden trim for design.

The resulting kitchen ran in to the rest of the house and has a warm, updated look that stands on its own. "We used to love our kitchen," says Lorraine. "Now it's hard to get guests to hang out anywhere else."

The cream color scheme—from the painted-and-glassed raised-panel cabinets to the back-splash tiles—unifies the kitchen and makes it feel more spacious. The new central island, topped with polished granite, serves as both a work surface and a casual dining area. A trio of casement windows over the sink maximizes natural light.



The Plan

Annexing space and recessing large appliances created a bigger, more open, and much more efficient kitchen.

WHAT THEY DID

- 1. GARTERED AND ENLARGED THE SPACE** Removing the peninsula that separated the kitchen from the breakfast room added 6 feet to the original 12-by-13-foot room.
- 2. PUT A NEW WALL BETWEEN THE KITCHEN AND THE DINING ROOM** In the old layout, the breakfast room led into the dining room through a wide opening framed by columns. Now a wall flanked by doorways marks the divide (and adds about 10 inches to the dining room). It holds a built-in chair cabinet that was relocated from another island in the breakfast room.
- 3. INCORPORATED THE BUTLER'S PANTRY** The narrow doorway to the butler's pantry was reduced by a 7-inch-wide, 50-inch-deep arched passageway. To accomplish this, the refrigerator and was bumped out by a foot so that it aligns with one of the walls of the former breakfast room. The wider doorway makes the island a part of the kitchen and lets in natural light from a windowed hallway.
- 4. RECESSED BULKY APPLIANCES** For a seamless look, the wall oven and refrigerator were built into either side of the arched doorway.
- 5. ADDED AN ISLAND TO IMPROVE THE WORK ZONE** The 21½-by-7-foot island adds a long stretch of work space in the center of the kitchen and provides before-counter-top storage for the microwave and cooking supplies. It is easily accessed from the left, right, countertop, and wall oven without two cooks bumping over each other.

BEFORE



AFTER



INSET ABOVE: Before, white-washed cabinets made the small kitchen feel claustrophobic.

ABOVE: After the new opening-up, bright, warm traffic flow enters the space and allows natural light from the adjoining dining room and pantry above (to the right of the opening) to filter in. A built-in white cabinet which was original to the house, now marks the far end of the kitchen.



The Details

All the elements of the design were fine-tuned, from decorative touches to practical built-ins.



- 1. THE FIXTURE** over the island is a reproduction of an antique chandelier in the dining room. The arch above the island was copied from one of the home's original doorways. The backslash marks the roof, with 3½-inch arch lines arranged in a horizontal pattern within the arch.
- 2. DECORATIVE BREADBOARD** finished the island's front edge, evoking the profile of the vintage chair cupboard at one end of the room. The island's turntable base is also repeated in some of the other built-ins.
- 3. THE PANTRY** above is framed by two sets of arches, one forming the door and the other creating a niche for built-in storage. Because the cabinets are situated at a hallway they are a mere 14 inches deep to allow for easy passage to the adjacent spaces. Dry ingredients are stored inside. The top provides a display perch for the owners' Italian pottery collection.
- 4. BUILT-OUT SHELVES** in one of the lower cabinets conceal the dishwasher, mixer and Cuisinart food processor, keeping the counters clear of heavy appliances when they're not in use.
- 5. A FAULTOUT SPICE RACK** has three shelves for seasonings, cooking oils, and condiments. It is handily accessible from both the countertop and the island work surface. At 14 inches wide, it makes good use of a narrow space.

For more kitchen ideas, trends, and products, visit www.bobvila.com/kitchen.

MY TRIUMPHAL ARCH

“To get the curve of the new kitchen archways just right, I traced an existing doorway from another part of the house. I just got a roll of butcher paper, taped a big sheet of it over the doorway, and outlined the curve along the top. What’s in the kitchen is as close as possible to what existed elsewhere in the house.” —Lorraine D’Amico, *Interior Designer*



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PHOTO: JAMES HARRISON; PHOTO: KEVIN MAZUR

The Art of the Frame

Carved, gilded, inlaid, or plain, vintage frames are worthy of a place on the wall—whether or not they hold a picture.

BY LIZZY KEND AND LESLIE KEND



Frames from flea markets and antique shops often have a handsome patina.



Antique experts Lizzy Kend and Leslie Kend are hosts of *Find a Star* TV series on PBS, celebrating the world's best design, style, and lifestyle. For more, see *Antique Hunters* by Lizzy Kend and Leslie Kend, published by the American department of interior design, *Antique Hunters* in New York City.

Whenver we're in an antique store, we find ourselves drawn to old picture frames, which are invariably stacked in a cobwebby corner beckoning us to paw through them. Often what we come across are solitary rectangles beyond repair. On occasion, though, we hit upon a real find—a Victorian-era gilded frame or a rustic wooden one with hand-carved Arts and Crafts details—for as little as \$100.

A CRAFT WITH A PAST

Frames not only protect paintings from dust and the warping that results from temperature changes, they also focus the eye and, when gilded, reflect light onto an image. The earliest American frames date to the Federal period (1775–1830) and were copies of European designs made from pattern books filled with Neoclassical motifs. Many were carved wood, but many had wood substrates decorated with a pliable substance that hardened like plaster, called gesso. Craftsmen would cover the wood or gesso surface with gesso, a paste of glue and chalk, before applying gold leaf.

By the 1860s, the Industrial Revolution's flowered companies to mass-produce elaborate gilded gesso frames for a growing middle class hungry for the showy style of the European aristocracy. But with mass production also came shoddy workmanship and overly elaborate decoration. In reaction, influential designers such as Charles Eastlake, an Englishman, urged a return to simplicity and craftsmanship. Eastlake's burnished and thinned wood frames with raised, rather than carved, ornamentation were an instant hit in America.

After the turn of the 20th century, artists and collectors began to design picture frames in concert with the

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TALKING SHOP

CHOOSING AND USING TOOLS

NAIL PULLERS

BY ADAM KELLEY
PHOTOGRAPHS BY FRANCESCO MOSCO

When it takes a heavy blunt object to drive a metal spike through solid wood, you definitely need something stronger than your fingers to pull it back out. That's why the tool gods invented the nail puller (Well, actually that's why the Romans invented it—right after they started using nails.) By forging a claw on the end of a fulcrum, early carpenters were able to increase their grasping and leveraging strength enough to undo their mistakes with ease.

With the 19th-century advent of balloon framing, which replaced timbers joined by pegs with lumber held together by nails, the market for ways to extract those nails took off. Today you can find everything from flat bars, good for levering heavy objects as well as pulling nails without marring wood, to cat's paws, with sharp claws that dig deep to grab hold of a stubborn fastener. One or both should be on any remodeler's tool belt, and another half-dozen specialized pullers, like the ones shown on the following pages, within easy reach.



Nail pullers were invented at a time when hand-forged nails were a precious commodity, salvaged and reused as often as possible. Carpenters even picked through the ashes of burned-down buildings to find them.

SMALL & LIGHT

TACK CLAW

Use: Lifting small nails, tacks, brads and staples, as on molding and upholstery.
Shown: Cobese tack claw, \$15.



END-CUTTING PLIER

Use: Plucking finish nails out of moldings without marring the surface or cutting their heads off flush so the molding can be pulled away.
Shown: Channellock end nipper, \$26.



MOLDINGS BAR

Use: With the flat end pulling moldings without damaging them, adjusting bend-down during installation. With the claw prying out finishing nails and ripping away moldings that will be discarded.
Shown: ShuckGate pry bar, \$16.



CAT'S PAW

Use: Gently and roughly digging under and pulling stubborn nails, tight demolition.
Shown: Endless double-ended cat's paw, \$10.



BIG & BRAWNY

FLAT BAR

Use: Lifting, prying, pulling, and churning with a minimum of damage. If you're going to have only one bar, this is it.
Shown: Stanley Super Wonder Bar, \$15.



RIPPING BAR

Use: General demolition, ripping up flooring, pulling apart studs, sheathing and shifting walls and joists. Not a delicate tool.
Shown: Estwing Shearwreck demolition pry bar, \$12.



IMPACT NAIL PULLER

Use: Digging under buried nailheads to trap them and pull them out.
Shown: Crescent Impact nail puller, from Crescent Hand Tools, \$60.



WRECKING BAR

(CROWBAR)

Use: Pulling big nails, prying apart studs (ifrig flooring demolition).
Shown: The Wrecked, from Fulcrum, \$15.



For more tool queries, www.thisoldhouse.com/tools



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It looks beautiful. But this house is made of faux. TOM'S idea for a light, wood-grain look.

True Faux

Wood, stone, and plaster look-alikes so convincing you'd swear they're the real thing

BY JOE CARROLL

Study the history of building materials and one thing becomes clear: People have been taking it for a long time. Two thousand years ago, Egyptians simply glued thin slices of limestone onto cheap boards, thereby producing the first veneer—and having the satisfaction of looking like a pharaoh. Today, thanks to the alchemy of modern manufacturing, you can fill a house with man-made products that mimic the building blocks of wood, plaster, metal, and stone.

Paints may scoff at such better superficiality, but there's logic behind making things that look like other things. Nineties of the 1980s, for example, figured out a way to make plaster imitate marble, so they didn't have to worry about the weight of stone slabs sinking their city. Twentieth-century scientists cooked up polyurethane that can pass for wood because it will never rot and needs hardly any maintenance. A well-made impostor may be significantly less expensive, but longer, or be easier to install than the real article.

Unfortunately, for every good-looking alternative many more are pathetically obvious or downright lousy. So if you're thinking about going with faux, call for samples, inspect actual installations, and ask people who've used it how well it holds up. "When you walk up to a front door, you shouldn't be able to tell the difference between real and man-made," says This Old House general contractor Tom Silva. When it comes to the products on the following pages, we can't.



LOOKS LIKE SLATE SHINGLES
but it's really recycled plastic

Made smart from car bumpers, these rubbery shingles are one-quarter the weight of real slate and carry a 50-year warranty.

Really check: Even close up, the textures and colors look remarkably like natural slate.

Cost: \$2.85 to \$3.45 per square foot, about the same as low-end slate.



LOOKS LIKE A WOOD BRACKET
but it's really cast foam

Cooled polyurethane isn't cut and dry. It's meant to open up so you get low maintenance plus great looks.

Really check: Indistinguishable from painted wood although it can't support a load. (With internal reinforcement, the same foam can be used to make porch railings and porches.)

Cost: \$75 per bracket, far less than the same piece custom-made from wood.



LOOKS LIKE WOOD SIDING
but it's really urea, cement, and wood fiber

Fiber-cement won't rot, warp, or burn, and goes down for decades. Stands up to freeze, earthquake, and even baseballs.

Really check: The smooth version is convincing, the textured wood-grain looks better.

Cost: 60 cents per foot, 75 percent less than premium red-cedar siding.

IMAGE: BARRY/ALAN HILLER; PHOTO: JIMMY K. HILLER

EXTERIOR LOOK-ALIKES



LOOKS LIKE RED CEDAR SHAKES
but it's really recycled tires

These rubber shakes—a blend of recycled tires, plastics, hemp, and Rec-shing off-hat rot, and people walking on them. The 50-year warranty surpasses that of any roofing made from trees when they wear out, just recycle them again.

Reality check: Aside to grayish the tan just like wood, but with the same growing tendencies.
Cost: \$2.85 per square foot, 30 percent more than cedar but 50 percent faster to install.



LOOKS LIKE PORCH DECKING
but it's really wood dust and plastic

The mixture of sawdust and polyethylene won't warp, check, rot, or attract termites. Its tongue-and-groove profile gives it strength and authenticity. Comes with a lifetime warranty.

Reality check: Forget for the rough, untidy surface, plus that you won't be walking on wood. For covered porches only, protected from rain.
Cost: \$6.75 per square foot, at least three times the cost of its flooring.



LOOKS LIKE A KNOTHOLE DOOR
but it's really foam-filled fiberglass

Even up-close inspection, this entry door looks like solid wood. But because it's fiberglass, it won't warp, expand, or need any care. A high-density polystyrene foam core insulates and adds heft to the fiberglass skin.

Reality check: The ultimate gotcha, there's no way to tell its true without cutting it open.
Cost: \$2,000 and up, about what you'd pay for a first-class door made of solid wood.



LOOKS LIKE CARVED SANDSTONE
but it's really cast concrete

Cast-stone products have the texture, strength, and through color and longevity of real stone but they're molded from colored concrete. At 130 pounds per cubic foot, it's not light, but it's not weighty like the quarry cut.

Reality check: Until stone carvers are a dime a dozen, it's the easiest way to get rock-solid looks and performance.

Cost: \$450 for a 10-inch Corinthian capital, a fraction of the cost of hand-carved stone.



LOOKS LIKE A STONE BALUSTRADE
but it's really cast-in-place fiberglass

The blend of ground marble with polyester resin and fiberglass yields a lightweight, waterproof, and maintenance-free material that can be sandblasted to resemble weathered stone, colored even on the surface.

Reality check: The only giveaway is the hollow sound it makes when you tap it.

Cost: \$70 per foot.



LOOKS LIKE A STONE WALL
but it's really cast concrete

Lightweight "cultured stones" are stuck to walls like tile along with mesh-ledges, metal ties, and heavy lifting during installation. Ideal mortar fills the joints. Chisel down a weathered color when all the way through.

Reality check: Entirely believable if installed by an expert who knows how to mix colors and join and make tight joints.

Cost: \$600 per square foot, a third less than real veneer stone.

INTERIOR LOOK-ALIKES



LOOKS LIKE SOLID WOOD FLOORING
but it's really a photo on linoleum

The newest laminate floors have embossed "grains" that seal with the image of the grain. One photo per plank means no pictures of end joints, the telltale sign of a true-wood floor.

Reality check: Many "real" floor mats, but won't be refinished when it wears out. A warning for duplicate plank makes a denting look "new."
Cost: \$3.50 to \$4 per square foot for "cherry" 40 percent less than real cherry flooring.



LOOKS LIKE PAINTED BEADBOARD
but it's really cellular PVC

PVC is unaffected by moisture, so steamy stoves, light and boards won't warp. It's milled and cut just like pine boards but it's too hot to burn with a knife or sandpaper. For walls only, it can be painted, but it won't be used outside.

Reality check: Looks like perfectly painted wood—perhaps too perfect for some.
Cost: \$1.75 per linear foot, about 75 percent more than just pine beadboard.



LOOKS LIKE SOLID MARBLE
but it's really crushed stone and resin

Unlike the inimitable granite countertop made of gravel-size bits of colored quartz, engineered marble is made with big chunks of the real thing. Stronger and more stable than natural marble, but it costs the same.

Reality check: Hard to tell if it's real marble, not quartz—just don't put it in a hot cut-on pan or at.
Cost: \$50 per square foot, about the same as a low-end marble.



LOOKS LIKE ORNAMENTAL PLASTER
but it's really polystyrene foam

Cast in intricate molds, just like real plaster ornaments, polystyrene moldings and medallions are so lightweight that you just glue them in place. They don't sink as they're being placed in your wall.

Reality check: You'd have to test it with your thumb to know if it's plaster. Mine is a fire, foam gives off dangerous gases, plaster doesn't.

Cost: \$25.50 for a 12-inch-diameter medallion, less than half the cost of plaster.



LOOKS LIKE MILLED WOODWORK
but it's really a flexible mesh

This rubbery plastic molding won't dent or chip. And because it bends, it's a perfect solution for beadboards along curved walls or ceilings, above arched doorways. Available in two forms, one for painting, the other for staining.

Reality check: When it's painted or stained, you have to touch it to tell it's not wood.

Cost: \$10 per foot, about half the price of custom-carved wood moldings.



LOOKS LIKE GLASS BLOCK
but it's really acrylic plastic

Acrylic is 30 percent more energy efficient than glass block and one-quarter the weight. Available in decorative panels in four different panel shapes.

Reality check: A near identical stone in the glass, although it's more vulnerable to scratching, staining, and fire.

Cost: \$5.15 to \$9.50 apiece, about the same as glass block.

For the materials we've used on project houses, www.thedecorhouse.com/hyogreen/housedecorary

5,000 YEARS OF FAUX

WOOD VENEER
Kipling's influence came from the grain, not the wood, creating the first known faux material.



STONE VENEER
Stone veneer is a thin layer of natural stone, usually plaster and pigment, over a substrate of masonry.

TRUSSER PLASTER
Artisans on the island use the plaster with marble dust and develop a light-weight plaster with a 200-year history.

CONCRETE PLASTER
Cast in free-form, concrete plaster is a light-weight plaster with a 200-year history.

WOOD GRINDING
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TRY TO SAVE THAT OLD HOUSE?

Four years ago my husband and I purchased the property next door. We had no plans at the time to restore the old stone house on the property, but now I feel it's a shame to tear it down or let it waste away. Our best guess is that the place was built in the 1750s. What should we consider when trying to decide if restoration is realistic?

PAUL A. HENN, GIBBSVILLE, Pa.



along is whether it's worth the trouble. To figure this out, start by looking at what the trouble is. What's wrong with the house and what it will cost to fix it.

TOM SIDA REPLIES: I hate seeing old houses torn down and hauled off. Most any house, no matter how rotten or rundown, can be restored, given enough time and money. So when you see "ruined," what you're really

Usually all the worst things that go wrong with houses—particularly ones that haven't been maintained for a while—are caused by water. This includes rot, mold and a lot of foundation problems. Because there's stone below, water has probably been eating away the mortar so the walls may need to be replaced. And I can see from the photo that every window sill is in pretty tough shape. The window frames are probably shot, too. You're looking at new windows—probably custom-built—all around. The edge looks reasonably straight, so maybe you don't have too many structural problems. But how's the roofing the shingles the siding the heating system? And the insulation if there is any? You put the deck

After you total all the repairs, you'll come up with a number that represents the minimum required to make the house livable. It'll probably be big. Then ask a realtor to figure out what the house might sell for if you fixed it up. Now you have two numbers to compare. If you could fix up the house and sell it or rent it and make a profit, great. But if the house costs a lot more to restore than it will ever return, your decision gets tricky. Obviously, some people decide to restore just because the house *repairs* them. But perhaps the structure has some other value. Is it architecturally significant? Is there a historic connection to the community?

If it's the bare-contact local and some historical societies to see if there are any grants that might help out with the costs. Or donate the house "as is" or have it dismantled and moved away by someone who can afford to give it a new life. There are many different ways to find people who are up for this kind of a challenge, including through Save This Old House on the last page of this magazine. In the meantime, do what you can to keep water from causing any more damage on.



The two things that Tom Sikes checks for when surveying an old house are the integrity of the flooring and any damage, internal and external, from water intrusion.



75 0000 1540, 1541, 1542, 1543, 1544, 1545, 1546, 1547, 1548, 1549, 1550, 1551, 1552, 1553, 1554, 1555, 1556, 1557, 1558, 1559, 1560, 1561, 1562, 1563, 1564, 1565, 1566, 1567, 1568, 1569, 1570, 1571, 1572, 1573, 1574, 1575, 1576, 1577, 1578, 1579, 1580, 1581, 1582, 1583, 1584, 1585, 1586, 1587, 1588, 1589, 1590, 1591, 1592, 1593, 1594, 1595, 1596, 1597, 1598, 1599, 1600, 1601, 1602, 1603, 1604, 1605, 1606, 1607, 1608, 1609, 1610, 1611, 1612, 1613, 1614, 1615, 1616, 1617, 1618, 1619, 1620, 1621, 1622, 1623, 1624, 1625, 1626, 1627, 1628, 1629, 1630, 1631, 1632, 1633, 1634, 1635, 1636, 1637, 1638, 1639, 1640, 1641, 1642, 1643, 1644, 1645, 1646, 1647, 1648, 1649, 1650, 1651, 1652, 1653, 1654, 1655, 1656, 1657, 1658, 1659, 1660, 1661, 1662, 1663, 1664, 1665, 1666, 1667, 1668, 1669, 1670, 1671, 1672, 1673, 1674, 1675, 1676, 1677, 1678, 1679, 1680, 1681, 1682, 1683, 1684, 1685, 1686, 1687, 1688, 1689, 1690, 1691, 1692, 1693, 1694, 1695, 1696, 1697, 1698, 1699, 1700, 1701, 1702, 1703, 1704, 1705, 1706, 1707, 1708, 1709, 1710, 1711, 1712, 1713, 1714, 1715, 1716, 1717, 1718, 1719, 1720, 1721, 1722, 1723, 1724, 1725, 1726, 1727, 1728, 1729, 1730, 1731, 1732, 1733, 1734, 1735, 1736, 1737, 1738, 1739, 1740, 1741, 1742, 1743, 1744, 1745, 1746, 1747, 1748, 1749, 1750, 1751, 1752, 1753, 1754, 1755, 1756, 1757, 1758, 1759, 1760, 1761, 1762, 1763, 1764, 1765, 1766, 1767, 1768, 1769, 1770, 1771, 1772, 1773, 1774, 1775, 1776, 1777, 1778, 1779, 1780, 1781, 1782, 1783, 1784, 1785, 1786, 1787, 1788, 1789, 1790, 1791, 1792, 1793, 1794, 1795, 1796, 1797, 1798, 1799, 1800, 1801, 1802, 1803, 1804, 1805, 1806, 1807, 1808, 1809, 1810, 1811, 1812, 1813, 1814, 1815, 1816, 1817, 1818, 1819, 1820, 1821, 1822, 1823, 1824, 1825, 1826, 1827, 1828, 1829, 1830, 1831, 1832, 1833, 1834, 1835, 1836, 1837, 1838, 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842, 1843, 1844, 1845, 1846, 1847, 1848, 1849, 1850, 1851, 1852, 1853, 1854, 1855, 1856, 1857, 1858, 1859, 1860, 1861, 1862, 1863, 1864, 1865, 1866, 1867, 1868, 1869, 1870, 1871, 1872, 1873, 1874, 1875, 1876, 1877, 1878, 1879, 1880, 1881, 1882, 1883, 1884, 1885, 1886, 1887, 1888, 1889, 1890, 1891, 1892, 1893, 1894, 1895, 1896, 1897, 1898, 1899, 1900, 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1906, 1907, 1908, 1909, 1910, 1911, 1912, 1913, 1914, 1915, 1916, 1917, 1918, 1919, 1920, 1921, 1922, 1923, 1924, 1925, 1926, 1927, 1928, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1932, 1933, 1934, 1935, 1936, 1937, 1938, 1939, 1940, 1941, 1942, 1943, 1944, 1945, 1946, 1947, 1948, 1949, 1950, 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954, 1955, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220,



RICHARD TETTEWE
RUNNING LEADING DOOR



Abstract 10-10-2004



2000年 4月 10日

CUTTING INTO JOISTS

I would like to reroute some water supply lines and a drain line from the kitchen sink through some floor joists. Is it okay to drill holes in joists, and if so, how big can the holes be?

Andrew Burrows, Taos, N.M.

RICHARD TRETHEWEY REPLIES: Now you know the kinds of obstacles plumbers face every day! Most wood framing is just not designed to make it easy to install pipes—or ducts for that matter.

Fortunately, it is possible to drill holes or cut notches in joists made out of sawn lumber without compromising their strength. You just have to make sure that the holes aren't too big or too close to the edge and the notches aren't too deep or too wide. The illustration shows you what the building codes allow.

Supply lines are fairly small, so you shouldn't have any problem working within these restrictions. A trench drain isn't a bit big either, but remember it has to be pitched at least an inch in every 4 feet, so the holes in the joists won't line up horizontally. And in a long run, the drain could end up being too low on the joist to create a penetration. At that point, it will have to be rerouted.

For engineered joists, such as laminated veneer lumber or I-joists, follow the manufacturer's hole-drilling specifications exactly. And never ever notch the top or bottom of an I-joist, which looks a bit like an I-beam that's made entirely of wood.

DRILLING AND NOTCHING SAWN JOISTS



DRYWALL OVER CRACKED PLASTER CEILING

We're restoring a house that was built in 1840. One bedroom has a ceiling with two large areas of plaster that are missing. Although the wood studs are still in place, the missing plaster amounts to about 25 percent of the ceiling area. When I run into that problem in

another room, I would use a plastering the whole ceiling. The time I was thinking of covering the ceiling with drywall, the joists are 24 inches on center. Can the ceiling take the extra weight?

HT Brown, Pleasant Hill, Va.

TOM SAVA REPLIES: The flooring in the ceiling will hold it, no problem. But before you start this project, first remove any loose plaster or use plaster washes and screws to secure it to the lath. Those wood studs you've referred to. Then find out how thick the plaster is. Place a straightedge on the plaster ceiling so it spans one of the areas missing plaster and measure from the edge of the level toward the ceiling to the exposed surface of the lath. If the plaster is 1/2 inch thick—that's pretty common—then cover the areas where the plaster is missing by screwing 1/2-inch drywall to the framing, not the lath alone. You don't have to do any fancy fitting. The drywall is there just to provide support for the finish layer of drywall.

I'd use 1/2-inch drywall for the finish layer because it levels out better than the 5/8-inch stuff. You're going to need help at this point from at least one person to hold the panels up and a "deadman" to hold them against the ceiling. A deadman is a T-shaped support made out of 2x4s that you wedge between the ceiling and the floor to hold up the drywall long enough to screw it in.

Arrange the drywall sheets so that their short edges can be screwed to the joists or strapping, if the ceiling has it. Two-inch corner- or three drywall screws should be long enough to do the job. Space

them 6 to 12 inches apart and make sure you don't drive their heads so deep that they break through the paper. Then fill the joints and screw dimples with joint compound and paper tape. After a couple more coats—each applied after the previous one is dry and some primer and paint, your ceiling will look as good as new.

KINKED GARDEN HOSE

How can I keep kinks out of garden hoses? It's a problem every day, but an even bigger one when I store them. Does it have something to do with the material the hose is made of?

James Phillips, South Amherst, N.J.

ROGER COOK REPLIES: Kinks tend to show up in lower-quality hoses or ones that have lost their flexibility due to too much time in the sun (and/or a rubber hose because it doesn't get brittle or have a mind of its own when I'm trying to coil it. Most hoses will coil more easily if you drain them completely. This is easy enough—just stretch your hose downhill on a slope or give of ground after disconnecting it from the faucet. Even a gentle incline will do.

When the hose is empty, loop it around the outside of a trench can. Then use Velcro strips or tie short lengths of rope around the coils in two or three places and remove it from the can.

You can store hoses on top of each other or hang them up. A coiled hose should be hung in a way that supports it at two or three points. Hanging it for long periods on a single support can dent the hose wall.

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THAT'S WHEN HE TURNED TO (THE NEXT PAGE).



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Installing Crown Molding with This Old House general contractor Tom Silva

BY JOSEPH TRONE PHOTOGRAPHS BY KOLIN BRINE

American new-home buyers have been conditioned to settle for the stopgap crown molding of 1980s, 1990s homes—basically lacking in carved detail, relying, among other things, on the gaudy railings that bring a room's sophistication to its knees. Primary among these is crown molding. The good news: Crown molding can be added without a big bill from the landscaper or shreds of drywall dust.

Installing crown molding, however, is a task that arrives first in the hands of every amateur carpenter—and once done, it's a relief. Because it sits in so snug on the wall, each joint is made of compressed angles. Getting it right requires a lot of patience, an aptitude for spatial relations, and a few tricks from an experienced pro.

TOOLS FOR THIS PROJECT

POWER MITER SAW

(rent for \$35 to \$40 a day)



COPING SAW

(for tracing inside corners)



CHALK LINE

(to create a reference line on a wall with an uneven ceiling)



HOT-MELT GLUE GUN

(for glue in temporary fence to the wall)



RASP

(for smoothing coped joints)



DRILL

(to predrill nail holes where molding is prone to split)



HAMMER AND NAILSET

(for nailing a pneumatic nail gun and compressor for \$25 to \$30 a day)



COST FOR AN AVERAGE ROOM:
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TIME:
6 to 8 hours

DIFFICULTY LEVEL:
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floor your guests



achieve wall-to-wall beauty



astonish with stone



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can arrange for expert installers to do it for you. We have the know-how to help you get your flooring project done right, at guaranteed low prices. Fall for your home with The Home Depot. **You can do it. We can help.**



SHOPPING LIST

CROWN MOULDING To get the number of linear feet you need, measure the perimeter of the room, then add 15 to 20 percent for cut-off waste and waste.

6d OR 8d FINISH NAILS

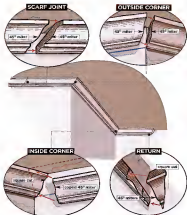
NO-DRY-DRY GLUE Or yellow carpenter's glue, which cures up more slowly but sets as strong as the end grain of a miter joint.

WOOD PUTTY
PAINT OR STAIN

There are some basic rules for installing crown molding that you can pick up anywhere, but the best way to master them is to watch a pro. When we asked Tom Silva to show us how he puts up crown, his 40 years of experience became evident right away. For one thing, he seldom picks up a tape measure, marking his cuts in place whenever possible. "Measuring leaves you open to miscalculations," he says.

He also doesn't lay the molding flat to cut it. Cutting crown flat, though it might seem easier, requires a saw that lets you tilt the blade (for the bevel) and rotate it (for the miter angle). You also need a set of tables to know the correct angles for the cuts.

Instead, Tom uses a simple power miter saw and arranges the material so it sits against the saw fence at the same angle it will be nailed to the wall. Although the molding has to be upside down in this method, a simple downward cut of the blade set at 45 degrees produces the perfect miter and bevel at once, as you'll see.



LAYING OUT YOUR CUTS

Before you start, lay out the cutting sequence for the room so that no piece of molding will be copied at both ends, because you'll never get it to fit right. Just make sure that any coped piece will have a square cut or miter at the other end. Then be sure the coped end is perfect before cutting the piece to length.



BACKING STRIP

When coping joints run parallel to a wall (check from above), or make a series of wall holes several inches out from the wall, you'll need a wood backing strip, glued to the wall and screwed to the top plate. It's cut as a miter.

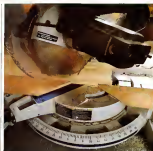


1 CREATE A GUIDE FENCE

- Place a piece of your molding at an angle upside down on the miter saw table so that the narrow base on the back of the molding rests on the saw table—the is actually the top of the molding, which will contact the cutting wheel in place. The wider base (actually the "wall" part of the molding) will be against the saw's vertical fence. Secure with clamps.
- Cut a piece of plywood or solid stock 30 inches long for a fence.
- Apply hot glue to the saw table on either side of its rotating center (pivot), and press the fence in place against the clamped molding. Hold it in place until the glue sets. Then remove the crown and cut away the center section of the fence at 45 degrees in each direction.

3 NAIL UP THE FIRST LENGTH OF MOULDING

- If the ceiling is uneven, use a chalk line to mark where the bottom of the molding should be nailed to the wall. Holding the crown to the line is more important than having a reference to the ceiling.
- Nail the crown on the line (up).
- If the ceiling is so uneven there are visible gaps at the top of the mold, dig glue a narrow scoop to the top edge of the crown (back) and use sanders to transfer the ceiling line. Use a jigsaw to cut along this line.
- Nail the molding along the top (bevel or beveling strip) and bottom (staple) with 6d or 8d finish nails, predrill as necessary.



2 MAKE THE FIRST SCARF CUT

- When two lengths of molding are required for a long wall join them with an angled, overlapping scarf joint.
- If you're working counterclockwise around the room, adjust the saw for a 45-degree miter cut to the left. Clamping it to the right if you're going clockwise. Then set the crown upside down as before, on the saw table between the wood guide fence and the vertical saw fence. Hold the glue you're leaving in on the side to which the blade is turned.
- Hold the molding securely, then cut through it slowly (slow).
- Leave the blade at the same position, and cut the adjoining length of molding with the piece you're keeping on the other side of the blade.

4 COMPLETE THE SCARF JOINT

- Apply a thin even layer of glue to the scarf joint on the molding that's nailed in place.
- Install the adjoining piece of crown so it creates a tight-fitting scarf joint (up).
- Fasten the second piece with finish nails top and bottom, and wipe away any glue from the scarf joint.
- After the glue dries, use 100-grit sandpaper to sand the joint smooth.





1 DETERMINE THE OUTSIDE CORNER'S ANGLE

- An outside corner can be formed by cutting two pieces of crown with opposite miters of 45 degrees each making sure both miters are longer on the top of the crown (the part that rests on the saw table when you cut). But sometimes a well corner isn't exactly square, so you must first measure the angle formed by the two walls and then bisect it.
- To do this, take two pieces of wood of exactly the same width and hold one against each wall, making sure their ends overlap by 18 inch or so.
- Next, draw pencil lines on the top of the upper piece (the one held flat to the ceiling) alongside each edge of the overlapping piece (below).
- Draw a diagonal line to connect two opposite corners of the marks.



3 CUT THE OUTSIDE MITER

- Mount a piece of crown in the saw (opposite down as before), leaving the blade set to the angle used to cut the first piece. This is the angle you'll use to cut the outside corner.
- Because the molding is angled down at the saw blade is moving to the right, you will be cutting the right half of the joint and you'll need to cut off the right end of the workpiece (over). If the blade is swung to the left, cut off the left end of the workpiece to complete the left half of the joint.
- Once you've cut the first piece, use the test scrap to adjust the blade in the opposite direction and cut the other half of the joint.



2 TEST THE ANGLE

- Turn the pieces so they are stacked precisely line in top of the other (make sure to put the piece with the pencil lines on top). Then take the stack to the miter saw but set one set of the boards' edges against the saw fence and adjust the blade angle to match the diagonal line.
- Saw through both pieces at the same time along the diagonal line. This cut bisects the angle of the outside corner.
- Hold the cut pieces against the coping as shown and check for a tight fit (above). If necessary, mark in which direction the angle is off, adjust the saw to match this corrected angle, reassemble the two boards as before, and cut them. Then test again to be sure.



4 INSTALL THE MOLDING ON THE CORNER

- Hold the molding pieces in position at the outside corner and check for a tight fit (over).
- Before nailing the molding to the wall, bore two pilot holes through the joint at the miter point. A 4d finish nail chucked into your drill works well here.
- Then apply glue to the miter joint and fasten each piece of crown with 6d or 8d finish nails top and bottom.
- At the corner joint, tap 4d finish nails through the pilot holes.
- Set all the nails.



1 MAKE A 45-DEGREE CUT

- Inside corners are composed of a square-cut piece that butts the corner and a corresponding piece that's cut on an angle and coped (carefully cut along the molding's profile) to conform to the first piece.
- Begin by installing a piece of crown with a square-cut end (zero degrees on the saw).
- Then position a second piece of molding upside down on the saw and adjust the blade for a miter cut. If this piece comes to the joint from the right side as shown in Step 3, swing the blade to 45 degrees left and make the cut (above). The bulk of the molding should be falling on the left side of the saw.
- If cutting a left-side coped piece, swing the blade to 45 degrees right, with the molding falling to the right.



2 COPE THE EDGE

- Highlight the very edge of the cut, along the profiled front of the molding, with a pencil.
- Next, using a coping saw, cut away the bivel. Angle the coping saw blade toward the miter about 5 degrees—a technique known as back beveling—and carefully follow the molding profile as you cut (above). Use the miter saw table to brace the work piece when cutting.



3 CHECK THE FIT

- After completing the coped cut, test-fit it against the square-cut crown that's nailed in place (above).
- If necessary use a rasp to remove more wood or smooth out the coped cut.
- Nail the coped molding in place and set the nails.

For more projects, visit www.thisoldhouse.com/thisoldhouse

CREATING A RETURN ▽



1 CUT THE RETURN

- Where crown molding doesn't butt into something you need to finish it with a return. Cut a 45-degree miter on the end of the crown (or you'll get an outside corner) and nail it up.
- Next, make a 45-degree cut in the opposite direction on another piece.
- Adjust the saw to zero degrees and lay the piece flat and face-down on the saw table. You'll need to remove your wood guide fence for this.
- Cut through the crown, starting at the very point of the miter joint.



2 COMPLETE THE RETURN

- Bore two pilot holes through the 45-degree return with a 4d finish nail chucked in your drill.
- Apply a thin coat of glue to the miter, then press it into place and hold it for a minute or two.
- Nail the joint gingerly with 4d nails through the pilot holes only if the glue fails to hold.
- Set the nails and fill all nail holes with putty (over).



THE LDC'S Simple Profiles

1/3 HOME: IN \$115 box, Federal,
Colonial Revival features

American carpenters built the earliest American houses, and the modest decorative details—straight, stocklike balusters and undorned newel posts—reflected the simple skills of the trades. Over the centuries, contemporary interpretations of a Federal-style rectangular baluster, painted to blend in or disappear against the walls, echo the entry hall's minimalist architecture. The stained oak handrail and stout, uncarved newel post (see cutout, opposite page) add visual interest without distracting from the simplicity of the design. Round, tapered balusters, also common to staircases of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, lend an even lighter look.

Six classic ways to
take a staircase
from bland to grand

ABOVE A STEP

BY JASON CARPENTER
PHOTOGRAPHS BY PHIL WICKELSOE

Without the backdrop of her double-wide, red-carpeted, carved mahogany staircase, Scarlett O'Hara's entrances and exits would not have seemed nearly so dramatic. Likewise, if George Bailey's wonderful life didn't include a daily struggle with a loose newel cap, he wouldn't have been quite the everyman. Even the Brady Bunch couldn't have exuded such early-'70s grooviness lined up along anything but an ultra-mod set of treads.

As the focal point of a house's interior architecture, a staircase is the primary mood-setter, a place where a homeowner can announce his or her individual style, whether it's the whispered elegance of Early American details or the bold strokes of Victorian excess. The quickest and easiest way to make a design statement is by tweaking the decorative elements—the handrail or banister, the vertical support balusters, and the anchoring newel post at the base, all together called the balustrade—that give a stair its identity.

On the following pages, you'll find six stair designs, from the simple to the ornate, and some of the classic American house styles where each is at home. Note how they affect the space around them, and use them as a guide for transforming your own interior. Because while any staircase can carry you to the next floor, one born of thoughtful design and craftsmanship can take your entire house to the next level.



AT Home in Greek Revival, Baltimore, Colonial Revival house (architectural) pattern book, which goes into topics as diverse as 19th-century gown design and the decorum they need to observe in domesticity to their houses. Given the time, it's surprising to find this book is a testament with more decorative ideas and novel points than when it was needed. This is the first, printed book of the book's history, and the book is a history of the book's history, and the book is a history of the book's history, and the book is a history of the book's history.

The modest decoration of early-19th-century stairs takes its vocabulary from ancient classical forms.



THE LOOK: Elaborate Details

The mid-to late 19th century brought rich decoration to the interior, as industrialization and the rise of the middle class allowed manufacturing to reach them and gilded factory-made house parts. For the first time, middle-class homeowners could afford the most ornate and intricate carvings. Intricate carvings of the period featured complicated carving, scrolls embellished with urns and other fanciful forms, and thick carved wood panels meant to evoke the solidity of carved stone. The effect is rich, luxurious, and masculine, despite the conventional



THE LOOK: Ornamental Metalwork

AT HOME IN: Neoclassical, Spanish Colonial Revival houses

Cast- or wrought-iron elements, more products of the decorative late-19th-century Victorian era, use heavier than wood and lend themselves to grand, curved staircases. Metal's versatility allows design details to be single and linear or wholly elaborate. Unpainted iron, dark by nature, can make a room without ample light seem even darker. Lighter metals like bronze, used to create the sunflower and leaf details pictured here, lend a more open feel. Most metal balustrades have wooden handrails, such as this one in mahogany, to soften them to both the eye and hand.

THE LOOK: Natural Simplicity

AT HOME IN: Craftsman, Prairie houses

In a backlash against late-Victorian business artifice of the early 20th century, started a movement that extolled handcrafted details and the beauty of natural materials. On staircases, the Arts and Crafts aesthetic takes the form of heavy wood posts, often topped with symmetrical caps or knotted balusters, and thick-shaped balusters designed to show off the grain of the wood. With the endless forest of wood on display in staircases, a stair rail like this one adds strength and structure to a room.



In Arts and Crafts stairs, the material—usually tightly grained oak—carries the burden of the design.



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Samsung, the division of Hope, Sears and Boomer is proud to be a part of the effort to make a difference in the community. This fund will help you find a cure for cystic fibrosis. The Boomer Builders Foundation has raised over \$20 million dollars and is advancing the cause through partnerships with corporations like Samsung and Sears. We're proud to support this deserving cause. To find out how you can help, contact the Boomer Builders Foundation at 212-525-7177. Samsung's Four Seasons of Hope. A little hope can make a big difference. www.fourseasonsofhope.com



Sears

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With no extraneous
details to distract the eye,
modern stair designs
celebrate function as
well as form.

THE LOOK: Minimalist

AT HOME The International, Post Modern, Contemporary houses.

Most modern stair designs take the Arts and Crafts emphasis on simplicity one step further, exposing all the working elements and eschewing trim, moldings, and other discomfort. Here, the "floating" stair has open risers and exposed stringers, even the bolts securing the tension-wire balustrade are fully visible on the novel post. (Note: Some local codes prohibit balustrades that create such a "ladder effect.") Because this type of stair is meant to be viewed as if it were a piece of sculpture, it looks best in an open space where the entire structure is visible.

IN YOUR HOUSE: Replacing a Balustrade

Tired of that generic novel post? Have a balustrade that doesn't fit your home's style? It's easy to transform the look of your stair—and your whole house—while leaving the basic structure intact. Stock parts are available at lumberyards and home stores, but for the truly fine, handcrafted look of the examples shown here, you'll need to hire a custom stair builder. Here are a few tips to know before you commission a balustrade.

Hiring: To find the best professional, get a referral—from a reputable general contractor, a trusted architect, or a friend.

Designing: Before you meet with the builder, sketch a design you like in magazines and books. Also, remember to check local codes. Some will allow you to replicate an original rail, while others will require you to level the code—beveled 36 to 38 inches high, and balusters spaced to block a 4-inch sphere (a baby's head).

Pricing: Have the builder come by and measure then give you a

written estimate, including the cost of materials and an hourly labor rate—usually comparable to that of an auto mechanic. Consider whether the stair will be stained or painted. Prefabricated parts, made from poplar or beech, are about \$4 cheaper per baluster than the mahogany, oak, or maple used for staved railings.

Timing: A custom job takes two to seven weeks from design to finish. Figure two weeks to mill simple parts, five to six weeks for hand-carved work. Expect excruciation to take anywhere from two days to a week. The simplest projects use existing holes for new balusters, but if you're changing hole locations, the builder will have to spend some time plugging the old ones or replacing the treads.

Finishing: Balustrades are typically installed without wet paint or stain, so expect to hire a painter or finish them yourself.

For easy how-to on installing or repairing an existing handrail, visit www.thisoldhouse.com and type "foster" in the search box.

HOW A PAIR OF NEW YORK LOFT DWELLERS
LEARNED TO LOVE A COUNTRY COTTAGE

GETTING GOTHIC RIGHT

When my husband, John, took a temporary teaching job at Carlson College in Northfield, Minnesota, it meant packing up our life in New York City for life in a small town. I was game. After all, it would only be for two years. But I also needed something to do, since there wasn't a big demand for careers in Northfield. On the flight out, I told John, "I want to buy an old house from some little old lady, who hasn't done a lot of stuff to it, and then fix it up. That will be my job." Unfortunately, there were no old houses on the market. He went, the realtor did show me a local architectural

gem: An 1879 Carpenter Gothic owned by a 90-year-old woman who had inherited it from her parents. Even though it wasn't for sale, we peered in windows and walked around the yard. It had everything I wanted, from the lace gingerbread detailing under the porch eaves to the steeply pitched gable roofline. And it was in a great location, across the street from a park. I told the realtor, "This is the house I want. Call me if it ever goes on the market." (Continued on p. 67)

BY HIGHWINDER ELIZABETH SCHOTT
PHOTOGRAPHS BY CRAIG HOLZER STYLED BY STEVE ROBERTS

PROJECT PARTICULARS

TOTAL COST Approximately \$25,000

HOW LONG IT TOOK Altogether about three years, but there were three projects spread over a period of about six years.

WAREHOUSE Custom cabinets in the kitchen and the double tub and separate freestanding shower in the bathroom—but we knew we were only going to do this once.

WHAT IS GOING WRONG? I can't have the house inspected. We bought it exactly on curb appeal without ever having stepped inside. But we were young and full of love for renovation. We didn't know any better.

BIGGEST CHALLENGE Seeing the windows in the beautiful woods, like we're inches off all the way around, so we've sat down we couldn't see out.

HOW I SQUAD IT All the custom windows had to be pulled out and a new larger set made and installed in a very modular.



INSPIRATION The wife was inspired when she read nothing more than some old magazines and a part of a pilot, hadn't read as before update she the house. I'm after the house since the house had been completely renovated on the inside, and the only way the house returned to its Gothic glory.

WHAT WAS DONE

Editorial Board



UPDATING CODE



④ **ENLARGED THE ROOMS:** The old kitchen and adjoining side porch were gutted and replaced with a new 10-by-23-foot kitchen and massive pantry. A similar side porch with Tuscan-style columns was built into a bay window that echoes an original on the front of the house.

① REMOVED TRAFFIC FLOW by opening the kitchen to the dining space with a pass-through.

ADDED-A 286-SQUARE-FOOT
SCREENED-IN PORCH AND
BIG DECK.

REPLACED A SMALL WINDOW in the dining room with French doors to access the deck. New French doors also separate the kitchen from the porch.

④ **WIDE WINDOWS.** A small bay window was added to the downstairs bathroom and a full bay was added to the family room to bring in light.

①MULTI-APPROACH. The house's first (and only) fireplace was built in the family room.

CONVERTED AN EFFICIENCY
APPOINTMENT system into a large
conference room.



ABOVE: A few students at the living-room parties create a sitting abode.

[illegible]

Shortly after that, Egert the call: The owner had moved to a retirement home, and someone had already put in a bid. We agreed it for \$1,300—and the house was ours.

A. CHUCK PAGE-LEFT

Although most of the original details, like the vase on the table and chandelier-style medallions, were intact, also knew I had my work cut out for me. Every surface, including the ceilings, was covered with dirt, glossy wallpaper—a daunting task to remove from ancient plaster. The hardwood floors and spiral staircase in the front entry were worn down to the raw wood, and the upstairs had been haltered into a makeshift casual apartment.

Even the charming front porch was dangerously rickety. And then there was the kitchen. It hasn't been touched since the 1930s, didn't have a refrigerator, and the stove leaked gas. We started by having the stove removed, but since we had just spent our life savings on the house, we could only afford a secondhand stove and refrigerator. But that was fine. We figured that once John started earning a salary, I'd have the money to start getting the house ready for resale.

While John spent his days in the classroom, I spent some machine-washing oak floors, scraping wallpaper of ceilings and walls, and refinishing the three worn staircases. One day I got a little crazy and took a crowbar to the grimy kitchen cabinets. John couldn't believe that I had actually torn them out myself. It was just their discrimination on my part. A local college had helped to install new stock cabinets and lay a new kitchen tile floor.

Outside, we hired a contractor to pour new footings for our decaying porch, but John and I replaced the rotting gangboard ourselves. We traced the old patterns onto new cedar boards and used screws from the collector's set.

The backyard arbor with its painted arch and lattice roof is an exact replica of the original which had fallen down after the homeowners moved in. The owners also rebuilt the adjoining Gothic picnic fence.



TELL US YOUR STORY

Did you renovate your home? Did you build it? We want to hear about your project. Please send copies of before and after photos, a floor plan (we cannot return copy materials) and a brief description of the work you did to **THIS OLD HOUSE**, 100 AVENUE OF THE AMERICANS, 27TH FLOOR, NEW YORK, NY 10001. We'll choose a winner of \$100 if your home is featured.

department to cut them. Tight on schedule, in just under two years and for a few thousand dollars, we had managed to successfully update our floor apper.

The homeowners might have turned a tidy profit if John hadn't been offered a permanent professorship. And by then, we had fallen in love with the house and the idea of raising a family and putting down roots.

RETHINKING OUR PLANS

The arrival of our son, Wiley, a year later, spurred us to make more changes in our home. We took out the old upstairs apartment and replaced it with a new, modern bathroom with a jacuzzi and a freestanding shower. To keep the vintage feel of the house, we added a pedestal sink and an antique mirror that had been in John's family. One of two small bedrooms became the baby's room and the other became our bedroom. Downsizing, the old formal parlor, which we had been using as a bedroom, became part family room and part John's home office.

In the next few years, between opening a restaurant and raising Wiley, I was too busy to work on the house. But I still had dreams of updating the kitchen with new appliances and expanding it to include an eating area. And John and I had talked about adding a master bedroom suite with walk-in closets and a bigger bath. Finally, we took our dreams to an architect who drew up plans to convert the attic space at the rear of the house and raise the roofline to accommodate a 500-square-foot master suite upstairs and a 330-square-foot kitchen with a soaring ceiling downstairs. The rooms would be large and contemporary in style.

But a few days later construction started, we got cold feet. Not only did the scale and style of the addition not match our modest period house but a friend pointed out that it wasn't even going on the three things that he thought made a house a home: a fireplace, a fireplace, and a screened-in porch to take advantage of Moscone's mild summers. We knew he was right and immediately began sketching a new plan.

DOING IT RIGHT

The new design centered on the kitchen at the back of the house. It was to be the hub of our home, a hub to be big enough for family and friends to hang out. To gain the necessary space, we paired the old kitchen and an adjoining side porch. That made room for a breakfast room set in a bay of casement windows, as well as a pantry/breakfast. The kitchen would also be connected to our new 36-by-36-foot screened-in porch.

The house never had a fireplace, it had originally been heated with cast-iron stoves. So our plan called for building a fireplace in the living room. And while we were at it, we could add another bay window to let in more light, build a deck off the new porch, and update the bedrooms downstairs. The contractor would bar agreed to all our changes, while a draftsman friend translated our scribbles into a blueprint.

I wasted every day to be right, especially the bay windows. So I found a local woodworker who made the windows in the new part of the house closely resemble the originals. But one side of the house still troubled me. It was basically a big, boring expanse of siding. So I drove all over the country, looking at houses of a similar size. On one, I discovered a small projecting bay window, which I later found out is called an oriel. I had it duplicated by our window maker, who installed it in the downstairs bathroom. Outside, it gives the house an authentic Victorian look; inside, it provides a ledge for reflections.

We must have done something right in our renovation, because there's not a week that goes by that someone doesn't knock on our door saying, "If you're ever going to sell this house, let me know." We nod and smile politely. But inside we're saying, Not a chance! ■

ARND BRONKHORST

BRACKETS

The original porch brackets were duplicated right down to the cut-out quarterell and front scrollwork pattern by having the design onto new 10-inch-thick stock.

DISTINCTIVE GOTHIC TOUCHES

The homeowners not only wanted to preserve their house's original features but also went to great lengths to closely replicate them.



WINDOWS

Bay windows were used in Gothic architecture to create interesting silhouettes on the facade. The homeowners added three new bays to the back and sets of their house. TOP: A full bay window in the kitchen breakfast room and was modeled after the original bay on the front of the house. BOTTOM: A square bay was added to bring more light into the family room.

BOTTOM: The new single bay or oriel window was copied from another vintage home in the area. It continues out with a low gable roof and a simple wood base.

MAILBOX

Although the reproduction window mailbox is not original to the house it adds to the vintage look. The homeowners found it in a catalog.



Twenty-five years' worth of history transformed. www.thisoldhouse.com/topstories

SPRING FEVER

When the season turns chilly, a gardener's imagination heats up

ESSAY BY ARTHUR T. VANDERBILT PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROBERT ATKINSON

Gardeners live in the future, always focused on what's going to be happening tomorrow. That's why you'll find us on our hands and knees planting spring bulbs on a blustery autumn weekend, knowing we won't enjoy their beauty for half a year, the longest half. We haul home a sapling and dig it in, envisioning how the tree will shade that spot when we're no longer around. We start packets of seeds indoors in February with the unshakable faith that they will turn into a cutting garden by July. Even when we're forced to wave the white flag of defeat and admit that the bed of lavender we'd planted as an escape



Artist Laura Swartz goes foraging throughout the Northeast for interesting materials to weave, knit and redeem it by turning it into one-of-a-kind rustic garden furniture. See this 48-inch-long low seat in 18th-century English Baroque style \$2,500. 303-294-1952, email@lauraswartzdesign.com

From lawn mowing to expiring completely, we're already planning. Next season we'll say: there, maybe that will do better.

In always looking ahead, gardeners at some point, inevitably, reach a day when they're anxious for one season to end and the next to begin. (Enough with the tulips already; bring on the fall chrys!) And in no season is this anticipation more intense than in winter. Yes, there is a special beauty to the winter garden—the radiance of the snow that we notice for the first time, the architecture of the oaks, the stark beauty of the evergreens against a backdrop of snow. But as the cold, dusty days drag on, all that goes old quickly. So on frozen nights, as the wind pounds the north corner of the house and rattles the window frames, we lose ourselves in the pile of gardening catalogs, and ideas begin to germinate.

All it takes is a glimpse of something in a photograph to set the mind to motion. How would a garden look tucked in around the larches along the garden path? Weathered gray, perhaps sheltering a small cast-iron table and three two-levered firewood chairs gathered dust at the garage. And the display of dashing *Hebe* flowers—wouldn't a bed of those colorful, forget-me-not flowers be perfect in that sunny spot on either side of the concrete bench? It will mean facing the rocky soil, digging a deep, extracting the stumps, mixing in some rich compost, but they'll love it then and there.

What gardeners on the darkest evening of the year could resist is a new shovel, a gardening cart! Pruners—surely it's time for a new pair. And how about those rose hedges beginning the catkins are always waiting; they're supposed to do well in shady areas, and shade you have (grapefruit, too, alas). Maybe this is the year you'll finally be brave enough to plant basil on the roof.

Gardeners try to walk winter through. Inevitably, two or three accurate but probably mild days in late January and the blooms of a single frosty crocus will convince us that winter's back has been broken. We're out there in a flash in our winter hats starting spring cleaning, stopped only by the next day's downpour and snow, which turns into yet another blizzard as the same express roars through. No, better to accept winter's advance and serve our time rather than trying for an early porch. During the spring, summer, and fall, we're too busy gardening to think, you thought. Who has ever seen a gardener actively sit in their garden or on the cutting board? There's always a weed to pull, a plant to stake, a lawn to mow, a shrub to trim. Now is the season to drink, to imagine, to fantasize.

Winter is the best time—perhaps the only time—for such activities. Better to be inside, sitting in the kitchen next to the shelf of gardening catalogs, studying the gardening catalogs and laying plans, while outside the wind twangs through the hollyhocks and the branches of the old oak creak and grow their complaints.

In his retirement at Monticello, Thomas Jefferson wrote to a friend, "Though as old man I am but a young gardener." Wrapped in warm winter dresses of our springtime gardens, so are we all.

Arthur T. Vanderbilt, author of *Gardening in Color*, has tended his half-acre lot in suburban New Jersey for more than five decades.

Wine growers in the Veneto region of Italy have been using these backpack sprayers for more than a century. The sprayer vessel holds fluid, so you can see it to hold all sorts of liquids, including water, herbicides and insect repellents. Even on a patch of ivy-covered stone, it's a great way to get a good spray. \$399.95. www.gardenweaver.com, 800-228-2942.



Here they come in: the Greenhouse Bottoms turn out pro-grade, stainless-steel garden tools that can stand up to any abuse a backyard gardener can dish out. Five-prong hand rake, \$49; transplanting trowel, \$42; 16-inch brass-plating shovel, \$10. 800-228-2942. www.gardenweaver.com



With these hand-carved granite stepping stones, your garden will be a place of "double happiness" for the mind (stone) and for the body (the heads off your lugs). "Chin in Opportunity" (24 in. square). Each measures 10 inches across. \$44. Stone Planet. 888-683-2892. www.stoneplanet.com



PHOTO: GARDENWEAVER.COM; GARDENWEAVER.COM; STONE PLANET



The vibrant art of Lushmore is the longevity and beauty of the Horner Collection as inspiration for their concrete creations. While that doesn't mean they're not and plants will not be around (because from now they're made to last). This Camphor stands in the high. \$199. 201-422-2222. www.lushmore.com

As much as we might like them to, gardens don't prosper at the same of a single tree. They need to be nurtured from seed, and only special ones come from Baker Creek Herbarium Seed Co. 1419-604-2997. www.bakerseed.com and John Schreiner's Garden Seeds. 860-567-6006. www.johnschreinersgarden.com



Stonehenge, North Wales, sits at the heart of "stone country" where the stone for these plant markers is quarried. The stone plant markers are made of a material that can be used with a light sanding. Comes in two sizes: 4-inch, \$14.95 for a set of six with pencil; 6-inch, \$18.95. Wrenman Company. 800-733-4146. www.stonemarker.com



For more gardening ideas: www.thefirsthouse.com/journal



LEFT: A new screen door shield was created from elements of the 1840 house's front porch (lower shield that had been stored in the basement). The front door, sidegables, and breezeway are all original; the screens were a later addition.

fasthouses. Thanks to the community's preservation efforts and vigilant building codes, much of this distinctive architectural character remains today.

The East Hampton home of Hallie and Jim Forbes is a fine example of how an old house can remain in its historic roots despite having been expanded and revised by successive generations of owners. An early black-and-white photograph shows the original 1840 Greek Revival farmhouse with a gracious colonnaded porch across its front. Town records reveal that a century later, in 1940, the house was moved down the road to its current location, and about the same time gained two single-story wings, one for a living room, the other for a family room. By 2006, when the Forbeses first saw the house, it had lost its front porch and gained an attached garage, added in the 1990s.

In spite of the exterior modifications, the interior of the house felt timeless. "We were impressed by the fact that the wide plank floors, the dropped ceilings crowning the door and window frames, and the six-over-six windows had been faithfully replicated in the newer parts of the house," says Hallie. "And we were charmed by the fact that the original parlor, dining room, and upstairs bedrooms all had working fireplaces."

But with just two bedrooms, and a kitchen that had last been updated in the 1950s, the place did present some drawbacks for the couple, who had a young daughter. "We knew when we bought it that we were going to have to add on to suit our family's needs," says Hallie.

ADDING UP

To create a graceful transition between the existing house and any new additions, Hallie and Jim turned to East Hampton architect Tracy Bookout, who had done a sensitive restoration on

RIGHT: A fourth salvaged from the old kitchen was incorporated into the new space as a bank of upper and lower cabinets. These were stripped and stained a warm brown to mark their place as part of the house's history. Their glass-front and flat-panel doors are repeated on the rest of the kitchen cabinets, which are painted white. **BELOW:** To give the walls of the gallery kitchen more height, the white upper cabinets are tied to the ceiling by an aluminum soffit with double crown molding. A windowed bay added in the 1940s, opens up the long, narrow room and accommodates a great eating area.



WHAT THEY DID

FIRST FLOOR



① **GUTTED THE KITCHEN AND PANTRY.** Without changing the room's footprint, new cabinets and stainless steel appliances were installed along with period molding and wainscoting. A glass-front two-piece hatch was built in its original location; dropped, stained and suspended into upper and lower cabinets, it fits the new room to the old.

② **ENLARGED THE FAMILY ROOM.** To match the living room wing the family room wing was extended & left to the side, which balanced the house. This also created space for a built-in entertainment center and area seating.

③ **LOWERED THE LIVING ROOM CEILING.** The living room's 11-foot-high ceiling was lowered by a foot to give the second-story master suite needed bedrooms while keeping the roofline low.

④ **PUT ON A PORCHICO.** To create a front entry on the 1840s portion of the house, columns and brackets were salvaged from the original porch.

SECOND FLOOR



⑤ **RELOCATED THE GARAGE DOORS AND DRIVEWAY.** To preserve the historical facade, the garage doors were moved to the side of the house and replaced with six-over-six windows that match those on the 1840s portion of the structure. The driveway was relocated to the side of the property.

⑥ **REMADE A SCREENED PORCH OFF THE KITCHEN.** This required a new foundation.

⑦ **ADDED A MASTER SUITE.** A second-story master bedroom and bath were placed above the living room wing.

⑧ **RECONFIGURED THE EXISTING BEDROOMS.** A new door connects one of the bedrooms, now an office/study room, to the master suite. The other bedroom room now connects to the existing bath. The original bedroom door, which opened onto the hall, was walled up.

⑨ **ADDED TWO BEDROOMS AND A BATH.** Two second-story bedrooms with a shared bath were placed over the family room wing.

PHOTO: JEFFREY PEARL; FLOOR PLANS: TRACY BOOKOUT; ARCHITECT: TRACY BOOKOUT

their friend's historic home. To fill the couple's need for a master suite and extra bedrooms, Broberg developed a plan to expand the second story. She placed a master bedroom and bath above the living room wing, to be accessed through a balcony at the original house that would be turned into a sunny sunroom after. The other existing bedroom, which had its own bath, became their daughter's room. Above the family room wing, two more bedrooms with a shared bath were added—a good thing, since mother-daughter room wars! To balance the living room wing, Broberg extended the family room wing 6 feet to the side. This also added precious square footage to the downstairs space for more bookshelves and seating.

Broberg's goal was to keep the original facade distinct and make the additions look like they had always been there. To that end, the renovated two-story wings were kept stepped back as well as down from the 1940 house. "You can clearly see what is the original house, which helps preserve an architectural lineage," says Broberg. "But it also meant that we had to really shoehorn in the new bedrooms so that they fit beneath the lower roofline."

"To keep the visual focus on the old part of the house, I kept the windows less ornate than the new windows," she says. "In working with period architecture, what's important



TOP: The elegantly turned new post and balustrade of the 35-40 new's first full staircase suggest that the house was built for a prosperous family. **ABOVE:** The family retains its original stepped

door casings, fireplace mantel and white pine floorboards. The white wall color, like the rest of the home's soothing color palette, is from Benjamin Moore's historic paint collection.

is not necessarily to match the overall size of the windows," she says. "But to make sure the windows and millwork patterns are the same, as well as the use of the individual pieces."

A STYLISH RIT

Broberg's second major challenge was to create a state-of-the-art kitchen whose look was in keeping with the rest of the house. Beyond within the existing footprint, the guested and completely refurbished the space with maple mill-joined maple cabinets and headboard wallcovering. She chose black granite for the countertop. "It has the look of soapstone—which would have been easy in the period of the house—but with far less maintenance," says Broberg.

Providing something of a template for the new cabinets, Halls and Jon decided to keep and refresh an existing painted pine, glass-front hutch from the old kitchen. It was updated into upper and lower cabinets, which were stripped of layers upon layers of paint, animal waste, grease, and rounded corners from the sink. "We don't know if they were original to the house, but they were certainly old," says Broberg. "It was another way to preserve the history of the house through visible cues."

Rather than take the kitchen's upper cabinets to the ceiling, Broberg filled the space with a soft and double crown molding appropriate to the period of the house. "While your first impulse might be to extend the crown all the way up, we first used them and said that decorative molding to draw the eye upward," she says. "This actually makes the room look taller."

EXTERIOR ENHANCEMENTS

Following some apparently original floor-porch columns and moldings that they found in the basement, Broberg and local contractor Larry Zimmanman created an elegant new porch over the house's existing raised-panel door, sideights, and transoms. "The town historian disliked the porch that had been there in Greek Revival, which dictated the new design," says Broberg. "But we decided not to take it all the way across the house, so it had been, because that's one of the features that makes old houses look inside." The new entry also incorporates a pair of old columns and a full-style door that came with the house. "We're not sure when these things were added, but they are a charming part of the house's past that we wanted to preserve," she says.

Broberg also relocated the garage door—they are now on the side of the house—and in their place added a pair of six-over-six windows, matching the house's originals. She renovated the driveway as well, so a one-lane manopole the front yard.

With the exterior (most included) finally clad in period-appropriate cedar shingles, the house—and the architect—were put to the test as a jury the couple threw to crown the project. "All right, long people like me, 'Which part of the house is old and which is new?'" says Broberg. "For me, that's the biggest compliment I can get."



ABOVE: Gink beams and tall boardfront wallcovering with a deep picture-ledge molding give the new master bedroom a feeling of age. **BELOW:** Details in the adjacent master bath evoke an earlier era, including hand-carved white and black, and white tile in the shower shown. B&B Interiors pattern marble floor tiles, and a curvaceous porcelain console sink.



For more on home design, www.theblueprint.com/s/lip

KITCHEN CONFIDENTIAL

Somewhere between The Dick Van Dyke Show and The Sopranos, the American kitchen stopped being some faraway room offstage, from which catered misadventures appeared, and became the family hangout. Like Tony and Carmela's great-room cooking nook, today's kitchen is where everybody ends up—to sit down for dinner, scrounge up a snack, stare at the TV, lair open the mail, and generally take care of family business (minus the guns, weedpots, and screaming matches, we hope).

It's not the first time the kitchen has taken center stage. In our homes, in the 19th century, in houses without ovens, it was the primary gathering place because of the cooking hearth, says social historian Merril L. Long, who has traced the evolution of modern conveniences in *The Comforts of Home*. "The kitchen was the warmest room in the house, and sometimes the only warm room," he says. *The Old House* TV's current project, house, an 1849 farmstead in Carleisle, Massachusetts, once had a similar sort of kitchen, with a partitioned stove—modern for its time—in the middle of the room.

Future owners of the Carleisle house won't need to warm their hands over an open fire, but they will enjoy a kitchen that's once again a nexus of family life. As envisioned by the TDH team and designer Kaitly Marshall, who has created over 100 dream kitchens for clients in the last 10 years, the Carleisle kitchen offers all the elements 21st-century homeowners want. "The challenge was to create a kitchen for today's lifestyle that still feels warm and cozy," says Marshall.

Who wouldn't want a piece of that? Here's a look at the smart choices they made—and how they can apply in the hub of your own home.

It's the most lived-in room in your house—even if you don't cook much. So whether you're planning a new kitchen from scratch or just making a few improvements, here's how a design pro navigates the choices—with ideas that can work at your house, too.

BY MAX ALEXANDER ILLUSTRATIONS BY TIMOTHY SLATTERY

SIZES & SPACING

Defining the dimensions of—and distances between—counters, cabinets, and fixtures right is crucial for comfort and utility. Too small or too close together, and the space feels cramped, too big or too far apart, and it becomes hard to work efficiently or ergonomically.

- There's at least 42 to 48 inches between counters or fronts of cabinets that face each other (or an appliance) to provide comfortable clearings.
- The lower island countertop is 30 inches deep to accommodate a farmhouse sink with 24 inches of work space on either side of it. The island's longest bar is 120 inches deep; it's minimum to accommodate full-size plates.
- The farmhouse sink gives the surrounding countertop a seamless look. The basin should be no more than 7 inches deep to fit easily on your back. For an undermount, 9 inches is a good max (allowing for a 2-inch-deep countertop).
- These countertops are a standard 36 inches high, but if a homeowner expects to stay in a house for a long time, it's worth customizing their height for someone taller or shorter than average (say, over 5 feet 1 inch or under 5 feet 2 inches tall). The usual countertop depth of 25 inches makes efficient use of the wall surface.

APPLIANCES & AMENITIES

These are a big consideration early in the design process: recalling what's in your wish list with what will work in your space. A kitchen outlined with more than five fixtures is not only a dream for entertaining, it makes daily meal prep a lot more fun.

- This wireless, flat-panel TV is portable (ideal for watching cooking shows while preparing a meal—or leaving the kids entertained while you fix dinner).
- A side-by-side refrigerator maintains bending, so it's easier on your back. The one's a generous 40 inches wide—great for carrying in food and hand plates for parties. With a more standard 36-inch model, go for one with the freezer on the bottom. Place it near eating areas to make repeat trips easier.
- In a kitchen that's open to a dining area, as here, an extra-quiet dishwasher with a stainless steel interior minimizes noise. Dishwashers are also less likely than plastic to discolor from hard water. It's placed next to the sink for convenient cleanup.

[continued]

- To make heating and cooling for a crowd easier, there's an electric wall oven, a warming drawer, and a microwave combination in one location.
- A range should be used to heat a house—heats evenly at full capacity. The six-burner 36-inch-wide model can cook more than double everyday cooking as well as entertaining. A dual-fuel range for this one delivers the fine control of a gas cooktop with the even baking temperatures of an electric oven.
- An oversized 48-inch hood was specified to handle the heat from this power-house range—indicates a better equal balance clean-up matched to its 36-inch width.
- Two garbage and recycling bins pull out next to the sink, intended to serve a family of four each has 35-quart capacity.

LIGHTING

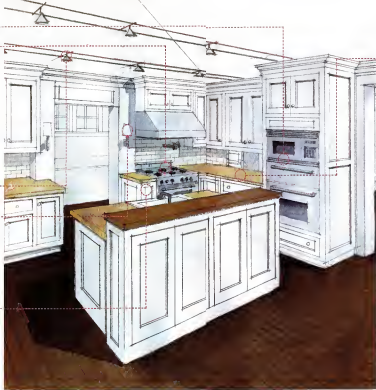
Any kitchen should have three types of lighting: ambient, which provides even illumination throughout the room, task, which brightens work surfaces, and accent, which decorates and highlights an area.

- Low-voltage cable lighting is the best ambient option with its options varied being it is also easy to adjust.
- Low-voltage strip lights are positioned near the front edge of the upper cabinets, which allows the light to wash over the backsplash.
- Spotlights make the entry to the home office and placed at eye level, help bring the high ceiling down to a more intimate scale.
- All-ambient and accent-light sources can be dimmed for entertaining.

STORAGE

It goes without saying, you can never have enough. Luckily, today's wider range of cabinet sizes makes it easier to exploit every nook and cranny.

- The five spaces on either side of the island are ideal for narrow base cabinets with slide-out spice racks, or drawers to hold baking sheets.
- Utensil-drawers are easy to reach directly under food prep areas.
- Upper cabinets in this plan are 13 inches deep (rather than the standard 12) to better accommodate today's larger appliances.
- A cabinet at the wide head-of-island area leaves the fridge holds bag platform and cozy. It has a flip-up door with a safety hinge to hold it open.
- A suction ceiling with open shelving is ideal for storing bulky dry goods and canned goods infrequently used serving pieces and appetizers, and extra china and glassware.



MATERIALS & FINISHES

The kitchen surface materials chosen here were chosen to withstand heavy use but also look great enough for company.

- Natural stone countertops (shown as low maintenance green tile) are durable and resist scratches and burns.
- The wood flooring used in the rest of the house (Quaker cherry) continues in the kitchen, but would have been in the 18th century but here it has natural heart underneath. The engineered wood strips have a factory-applied finish that comes with a 25-year warranty. It will protect against traffic scratches and moisture and make cleaning a lot easier. Area rugs placed in high-traffic spots, like in front of the sink, will help reduce wear.
- The colors of the countertops and floor are designed to complement each other. The island's multi-layered counter is stained to match the floor.
- Ceramic tile used on the backsplash is easy to keep clean.
- The painted cabinets are kiln-dried maple, with a factory-applied baked-on finish that's 5 mm thick.
- The possible farmhouse-style sink looks appropriate with the traditional flat-panel cabinets.

THE ALL-IMPORTANT WORK TRIANGLE

In kitchen Design 101, arrange food prep and clean-up areas in easy-to-navigate groups of three for comfortable and efficient work flow. The most common grouping is sink-stove-refrigerator. In the Carole kitchen, there are a number of additional, specialized work areas, including:

- Microwave island counter/dishwasher-for casual meals
- Refrigerator/sink/dishwasher snack-prep counter—for afternoon snacks
- Dishwashing drawer, range, sink-for informal entertaining



Old stone fireplace, double-door kitchen island, and a 21-foot-long glass skylight are just a few of the original features that inspired the new. The kitchen, with its mix of simple, rustic wooden cabinets, granite countertops, and a rustic tile backsplash set without great fuss to infuse stone—a nice compromise to the exposed timbers. The homeowners achieved the convenience of an old-fashioned kitchen table.



A new timber-frame house draws its inspiration and form from the old barn it replaces



BARN AGAIN

BY JILL KROWNER SIMPSON PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOEL STANDART STYLED BY GERRI WILLIAMS

Jon Campione always had a soft spot for the dilapidated barn that dominated her property in the pre-Revolutionary settler town of Guilford, Connecticut. Located in its historic district just off the town's main square, the barn was built in the mid-1800s. Its distinctive irregular shape, gable end windows and clipped eaves looked—added in the Victorian era—gave it a bit more polish than its rural cousin. But it had been so neglected that its roof had caved in and it was being held upright by cables. Nevertheless, when Jon's husband passed away, she decided to rent out her home and restore the barn for herself.

To her disappointment, the restoration she coordinated told her that the barn's wood frame was too far gone to repair. Still determined, she decided to restore as much of the original materials as she could and build a house that captured the barn's history and look. Her plan appealed to the board of the historic district, but they took it one step further: They required that the exterior of the new structure match the old barn, in appearance—at least, it had to be built within the old footprint. Jon enlisted the help of her architect son, Russell Campione, and his wife and business partner, Mary Jo Keener, to draw up the plans and oversee the construction.

CHOOSING TIMBER FRAMING

Russell and Mary Jo wanted to preserve the barn's rough-hewn character inside as well as out, but also needed to come up with a floor plan that handled Jon's needs within the tall, overgrown space. It didn't take long to settle on a timber frame—large beams joined in vertical posts and exposed on the inside of the structure—as the right construction method. Russell chose Steve Amato, a timber framer from Ulster Jay, New York, to apply this centuries-old craft to the new home. Because the original barn, whose shape had to be faithfully replicated, was a large rectangle with no basement, attic, or upstairs wings, the frame could be kept simple. The house is a "lean-to" design in timber-frame speak, meaning it has four equally spaced, A-shaped frames that span the house from side to side. The wall and roof panels that sheathe the exterior are attached to these beams, as is the floor framing on the exterior. "We kept the design of the beams simple as well," says Amato. "And

What They Did

The first floor incorporates the entry and utility spaces. The primary living area is concentrated on the second floor: the living room, dining room and kitchen on this floor all run double-height to the rafters. The partial third floor loft includes a guest bedroom, bath, and sitting area.

FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



THIRD FLOOR



The paneled enclosure for the living room fireplace and chimney incorporates a pantry on one side and stereo cabinets on the other. Much approximately 800 square feet on each floor, every inch of space was used for built-in storage.

each home is the same." Uncomplicated design is one of the keys to controlling the cost of a timber-frame structure, and it creates a consistent interior look.

When the old barn was torn down, the crew recovered everything usable: a triangular window, eaves details and rafters, as well as some floorboards that became casework in the new house. Inspired by an adjacent—most recently—18th-century place, they gathered fieldstones from the property for the fireplace. Above the stone, wide chipboard siding echoes the original barn, and the scale and symmetry of the windows are also appropriate to the era and similar to those of neighboring buildings.

THREE-LEVEL FLOOR PLAN

Since the original barn was rather tall (being in town, the first owners had to build up, rather than out, even in the 1930s), Russell and Mary Jo had three floors to work with—which allowed them to squeeze in 2,480 square feet of living space. After much consideration, they chose the second floor for the main living area of the house, which provided bonus light, taller ceilings, and a sense of security for Jan. The space contains a double-height living room, dining room, and kitchen, and a master bedroom suite, a small study, and a powder room. "I love being up," Jan says. "The light makes me happier, especially in the winter." They leave the first floor devoted to utility spaces—an open garage, workshop, laundry room, and home office/crafts room. Tucked up on the third floor are a guest room and bath, and a sitting area overlooking the living room.

Because the plans to live in this house for years to come, Jan wanted it to be fully accessible, so an elevator was installed to connect the first and second floors. "Residential elevators have become much more affordable," says Russell, who often stacks doors and points a forcing to support the addition of an elevator for clients who might want one later. But Jan doesn't just want it for her later years: "I will downhill ski, so if I break my

ILLUSTRATION: JAMES HARRIS



Working with a designer was so thorough that the back of the house provides a dramatic perspective. Architect David Cummings, the general contractor, and the interior architect, designed the beautiful living room and kitchen, creating a warm and inviting atmosphere.



Although new to the underside of the first-floor rafters, the second-floor dining room was made more intimate by the addition of exposed timber joists at ceiling height. A bank of six 12-inch-dia. columns—used for china and table linen—divides the dining area from the kitchen. The homeowners had a local blacksmith forge the dining room chandelier.

log. I'll need it now," says Jim, "and it's incredibly helpful with the laundry and groceries." The elevator is barely noticeable, however, as it is tucked within the central core of the house, just steps away from the stairwells: a hold-three-story staircase at the back of the house, designed and built by Russell.

THOUGHTFUL CONSTRUCTION DETAILS

Although timber framing is more expensive than a conventionally framed house (by 30 percent in this case, Russell estimates), it offers several advantages. One is how the house is enclosed. Russell and Mary Jo used structural insulated panels (SIPs) on the outside of the Douglas fir timber frame. The panels, which consist of rigid foam insulation sandwiched by oriented strand board (plywood-like sheets of large wood chips and resin), have more insulation value than conventional walls. They are also an extremely weatherproof and go up very fast, which helps limit the frame's exposure to weather during construction. And because the joints are applied on the exterior, the rafters are fully exposed inside.

Another advantage of a timber frame is that its exposed wood reduces the need for moldings and elaborate interior finishes—in this case, the walls are primarily painted drywall. Russell and Mary Jo left a space of 1/8 inch between the SIPs and the timber frame so the drywall could be stapled behind the joints and cut here to be raised out where it met them.

The floor framing is also a little unusual. In many timber-framed homes, 2x6 or 2x8 planks are nailed on top of floor joists, creating a finished ceiling for the rooms below and a floor for those above. In this case, Russell and Mary Jo used a conventional floor system—joists and subflooring—on top of the pinking. This allowed space for sound insulation between floors, as well as plumbing for the kitchen, bathrooms, and the radiant floor heating unit throughout the house.

Steve Mohrhead, a draftsman who helped with the design and oversaw the construction,

underscores the importance of planning everything early with a timber-framed structure. "It's important to have a detailed design at your head of how it looks and works in the end," says Mohrhead. "In this case, we were concerned not only by the frame but by historical guidelines." In fact, the historical board came out and measured to make sure the house wasn't an inch bigger than the original.

FINAL RESULT

Given the compact size of each floor of the barn, Russell and Mary Jo made the most of every square inch. Pantry and storage cabinets are tucked into either side of the gas fireplace, and the bedrooms and study are lined with walls of built-in cabinets, drawers, and closets. The open living area allows adjacent rooms to visually "borrow" from each other. For example, the study looks bigger because it's open to the living room, yet it has floor-to-ceiling pocket doors that offer privacy for overnight guests sleeping on the pull-out couch.

Just spent much of her time during construction researching materials and finishes, and choosing colors, hardware, and fixtures in the Colonial style she has always loved. In the kitchen, the cabinets are a mix of cherry fluted-wood doors and drawers with fronts painted in the sage green and grayed blue found throughout the house. Front-end counters offer the richness of stone in a durable and more affordable stone-made material.

"I worried about what it would be like to live here," says Jim. "But I felt a sense of security and comfort from the moment I walked in the door." She admits that feeling with others by entertaining frequently in her new home. The first party was an open house for 150 people to celebrate her new digs, but her first was a kind of homecoming. "We couldn't have neighbors actually help build the house, but I had my friends and all the people who worked on the house gather together to help celebrate it." ■

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Timber-Frame Options

Folks who choose timber framing over conventional stud-wall framing are drawn to the time-honored values of this building construction and the historical continuity its silvery techniques represent. Until recently, however, a scarcity of builders had limited its popularity. Fortunately the revival of such craftsmen has grown, and there are now more than 400 timber-frame builders across the country. While most of these businesses are regional, some will build a home to specifications, and they'll do your site.

Most timber-frame builders work in a similar way. The timber and metal joints are cut in a large shop, carefully tested for fit, disassembled and shipped off to be assembled and raised under the builder's close supervision. The actual construction is just a few days. Choosing a timber-frame builder is like quality any contractor. "Find out how long a company has been in business," advises Mike Morris, coauthor of *The Timberhome Man*. "Do they build custom or just stock designs? Also talk to previous customers about how it went, then look at the work itself, especially the craftsmanship and whether the various members are in pleasing proportion to each other."

Another important choice is the species of timber. Hardwood will span the greatest distances, allowing for larger rooms. Oak is the most commonly used, but cherry, ash, hickory and poplar are sometimes options. However, hardwoods have a tendency to be check (split) and shrink more than other choices. Most people who come to timber framing love the characteristics of wood,



including checking," says Frank Bekler, president and owner of Riverbend Timber Framing, in Bixford, Michigan. "If not, we direct them to soft woods like Douglas fir, white pine, cedar and hemlock kiln-dried material or timber salvaged from old structures, which has had decades to dry." All will develop less checking than a new hardwood frame.

The appeal of timber framing isn't limited to people building new homes, either. It can be used for additions and combined with other construction. "That's why we do so many hybrids," says timber-framer Steve Amato. "People ask us to add a timber-framed great room or a timber roof for a stick-framed home."

Looking for a timber-frame builder near you? The Timber Frame Business Council (www.timberframeandjoin.com) can help.

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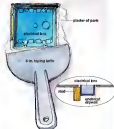
Handy Hearing Protection

Whenever I'm using a power tool, I get on some kind of hearing protection to block the noise. I prefer the multi-type protectors because they're comfortable, highly effective, and hard to lose, plus, I can put them on and take them off quickly. Like any tool, though, earbuds aren't used if they're buried in the back of a drawer.

That's why I store my earmuffs where I need them. I hang a pair over the frame of my power table, for example, as a reminder to put them on before I flip the switch. You can also clip them around your waist, park them on the blade-height adjustment of your table saw, or hang them on your tool box or lawn mower. Compared with the loss of your hearing, the cost of those extra pairs of earmuffs is minimal.



Patching Gaps Around Electrical Boxes



When the gap between an electrical box and the drywall is too wide to hole with a mesh plate but too narrow to patch with a scrap of drywall, many people fill it with a fiberglass-reinforced joint compound. That works fine, but the method I use is just as good, and it's faster.

To get a good bond, I first undercut the edges of the drywall with a utility knife. Then I mix up a small batch of plaster of paris and load it between the box and the drywall with a 4-inch taper hole. (There's a lot faster than joint compound and doesn't shrink, so I can quickly fill the gap with a couple of coats, if necessary. And when the plaster is dry, I use sand or smooth and I'm done.

Scribing Timber to Stone

The look of a massive timber mantel on a rough stone chimney appeals to many people. But getting that timber to fit snugly against the irregular surface isn't as easy as scribing it to the piece of wood.

First, position the timber temporarily against the chimney exactly where you want it, and make sure it's level. Set the legs of your scribing compass to span the largest gap between the mantelwood and the back of the timber (probably at a corner joint). Now place the compass pencil on top



of the wood and its point against the stone and drag the compass along the chimney's irregular surface. Just make sure to hold both point and pencil up at the same level and in a line perpendicular to the timber's face. Repeat the procedure on the mantel's top edge, bottom edge, and both ends. The pencil line left on the timber is called the scribe line.

Remove the timber from its temporary support and mark a 1-inch wide boundary on its back face. Curve out the area inside this boundary to a depth at least 1 inch greater than the distance your compass was set to. (File using a router with a mounting bit, but a grinder or chisel will also work—eventually. Finally, set a plane to trim along the scribe line. Turn the work piece at a 5-degree angle so the cut heads inward slightly. That makes it easier to fine-tune the scribe line and get a perfect, no-gap fit.

PHOTO: PETER A. HOLLAND; TOOL: JEFFREY H. HARRIS/STUDIO CITY

Organizing Lumber and Trim

If here to throw out something that might come in handy someday, but all that You know that eventually creates a problem of its own, where to store all the stuff that accumulates. My biggest difficulty is dealing with all the pieces of wood I collect. That's why I have a lumber rack.

It's nothing fancy, but it allows the pieces to be flat—wood is too likely to warp and twist in that position—and keeps them off the floor. (The moisture in a concrete garage or basement floor will eventually render wood worthless.) The rack's supports are spaced about 3 feet apart to prevent the heavier pieces from sagging.

I do my best to keep the rack neat. For instance, whenever I add a piece of wood to the rack, I put its length on one end with a Shaper so I can easily find the piece I need without having to pull it out. And despite my clumsy tendencies, I don't ever mangle less than 3 feet long or plywood less than 2 inches wide. Usually



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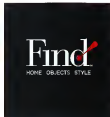
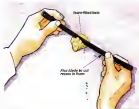
New Uses for Old Hacksaw Blades

After my tip was published about what to do with dull hacksaw blades (September 2004), some readers offered tips of their own. Here are a couple of good ones.

Arnon Butler (Danville, Pa.) mounts an old blade to the edge of a tabletop in his shop and uses it to score sheets of sandpaper. Peening the teeth down is a good idea, too, because it reduces the chance of accidentally breaking your hand against the blade.



John Barber (St. Charles, Mo.) finds that even a dull hacksaw blade is still sharp enough to cut through the spray-can insulation that he uses to fill holes around his home. The blade's flexibility allows him to either cut the canal from both or bend the blade enough to carve out a cavity that can be filled with joint compound.



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handrails

Massachusetts homeowner Levert Flint needed handrails in his stairways, but was puzzled by how to put them in his streaked Ash Tree Old House, and Tim Silver showed up to lend an expert hand.



irrigation

Outside of Los Angeles, Roger Cook and specialist Sub-Surface help homeowner Sherry Steele restore water to her slice of the left desert.

sinks

Minnesota homeowner Anne McCadness tried to fix her rusty bathroom sink stopper with a popcock stick. Richard Erdwey provided a more professional solution.



closets

California couple Erin and Patrick Gaudin's 1980s-style closets were stuck. They installed Ask The Old House and before long Tim Silver put them back on track.

what's your problem?

Tune in and watch The New This Old House, Thursday nights at 8:00 p.m. ET to see if we have the answer you're looking for.



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On the Job, p. 28 What will they think of next? See-through controls? LITeCar is still in development.

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STYLE AND THE ROOM: THE ART OF THE FRAME

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State staples: Authentic Roof by Crown Building Products Ltd., Burnaby, Ontario, Canada; 905-529-6338, www.authenticroof.com. Wood bracket, ornamental plaster medallion: Style Solutions, Inc., Annapolis, MD; 800-446-3840, www.style-solutions.com. Wood siding: James Hardie Siding Products, Missoula, MT; 888-542-7940, www.jameshardie.com. Red cedar shingles: Riverside, Chatham, Ontario, Canada; 519-800-8355, www.riverside.com. Patch flooring: Trex Inc., Troy, AL; 800-626-8773, www.trex.com. Kaddy-older door: Jeld-wen, Kalamazoo, MI; 800-448-3667, www.jeld-wen.com. Carved seat stone: Thandrona LLC, Lincoln, NE; 402-426-2122, www.thandrona.com. Carved stone balustrade: Midco Classics Inc., Lawrenceville, GA; 800-963-3603.

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The Carlisle project marks the 25th anniversary of television's first home improvement series, as well as the debut of its newest cast member, senior design consultant Alex Hampton. For this milestone project, we're returning to our roots by purchasing a house in rural Carlisle, Mass. This simple Greek Revival-style farmhouse, built in 1840, will be renovated and sold to homeowners who will enjoy its new life as a modern house with historical depth. Tune in and watch the progress at prime time exclusively on PBS, Thursdays in the first half of *The New This Old House Hour* at 8 p.m. ET (visit www.thisoldhouse.com or check local listings).

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Ask This Old House

Ask *This Old House* returns for its third season on PBS with truckloads of home repair solutions. The guys will hit the road knocking on doors nationwide, from West Coast studio ranches to classic New England Cape Cod, solving every home maintenance problem. Tune in for new episodes of *Ask This Old House* in prime time exclusively on PBS, Thursdays in the second half of *The New This Old House Hour* at 8 p.m. ET (visit www.thisoldhouse.com or check local listings). If you've got a problem for our experts, send an email to askthisoldhouse@thisoldhouse.com or mail a letter to Ask This Old House, This Old House Magazine, 1105 Avenue of the Americas, 27th Floor, New York, NY 10036.

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INSIDE This Old House

Go behind the scenes and learn what it was really like back in the early years of *This Old House*. Host Kevin O'Connor shares some classic moments, and master carpenter Norm Abram, general contractor Tom Silva, heating and plumbing expert Richard Trethewey, and landscape contractor Roger Cook divulge links of the inside and reveal which materials and techniques have stood the test of time. Catch *Inside This Old House* exclusively on A&E. (Check local listings or visit www.aetv.com.)





Flintstone p. 30: A reality check on the best look-alike building materials. Here, cast concrete stones alone—and costs a third less.

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ASK YOUR OLD HOUSE
p. 41-47

Stone Impregnator TMK Stone Care Systems, San Francisco, CA, 415-645-5603, www.stonecare.com **Marble** and stone Company, Arcadia, California, 800-330-1501, www.marbleandstone.com **Sealing oil** Cabot's Blending Oil, Samuel Cabot Incorporated, 800-877-9146, www.cabot.com

AFTER ABOVE
p. 51-65

Single Profiles Conestoga Architects and Planners LLC, Conestoga, PA, 800-767-0075, www.conestoga.com **Outside Decorations** Aesthetics Decorative

Architects, Southampton, CT, 203-325-4833, www.aesthetics.com **Elaborate Details and Ornamental Hardware** White Associates LLC, New Canaan, CT, 203-364-0045, www.whiteassociates.com **Neutral Simplicity** Peeling & Co. Custom Builders LLC, New Canaan, CT, 203-372-3113, www.peeling.com **Minimalist** Eric Benberg Architects, East Hampton, NY, 631-328-9928, www.ericbenbergarchitect.com **Our Own** Inc. Ben Whitehead, www.ourowninc.com **at** Mt. Laurel, NJ, 856-259-9111, www.ourowninc.com, William Green & Associates, New York, NY,



"A Step Above," p. 57: Staircase in a modern air conditioning. The one is suited for a minimalist, rustic or Spanish Revival style.

212-694-2821, www.greenarchitects.net; Keith Morgan, Professor of Architectural History, Boston University

THE ROOM OF ITS PARTS
p. 74-75

Architect Benberg & Clapman Architects, East Hampton, NY, 631-329-9938, www.benbergaclapman.com **Kitchen design** Sarah River Kitchens, East Hampton, NY, 631-329-7122, www.sarahriverkitchens.com **Contractor** Loran Cosentino Inc., Amagansett, NY, 631-267-8668, www.lorancosentino.com **Decorative** Falk & Gordon Interiors, East

Hampton, NY, 631-329-6261, www.falkgordon.com **Tile and bath fixtures** Alan Court & Associates, East Hampton, NY, 631-324-7497, www.alancourt.com **Kitchen items** (various materials, styles, and brands) **Williams-Sonoma**, 800-541-1343, www.williams-sonoma.com

THE GREAT KITCHEN IDEAS
p. 80-82

Architect Jeremiah Eck Architects Inc., Boston, MA, 617-363-6096, www.jeremiasheck.com **Kitchen designer** Kathy Marshall, CKD, K. Marshall Design Inc., Hamilton, MA, 978-463-7199, www.kmarshall.com **Illustration** (various) Lorna Allen, CKD, Art By The Square Foot Inc., Danville, MA, 304-243-1274, www.artbythesquarefoot.com **Cabinetry** Plus & Fanny Cuccia Cabinetry, Schaffersville, PA, 800-447-9906, [www.plusandfanny.com **The Cabinetry** Kitchens Design Studio, Hanover, MA, 781-829-9123, \[www.kitchensdesignstudio.com **Cabinetry** \\(various\\) Baldwin Hardware Corp., Braintree, PA, 800-556-1818, \\[www.baldwinhardware.com\\]\\(http://www.baldwinhardware.com\\) **Faucet** Calmar, Hill Down, American Standard, Piquette, NJ, 800-442-1902, \\[www.americanstandard.com\\]\\(http://www.americanstandard.com\\) **Sink** London Farm Sink model # 23810, Piquette, 866-655-6118, \\[www.piquette.com\\]\\(http://www.piquette.com\\)\]\(http://www.kitchensdesignstudio.com\)](http://www.plusandfanny.com)

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"Here Again," p. 88: Glass storage in this new modern home includes a party area's sleek cabinet tucked into either side of the fireplace.

The American House and the Evolution of Modern Commerce, Three Rivers Press, and *Open House: A Guided Tour of the American Home*, Henry Holt and Company

MARK ADAMS
p. 48-51

Architect: Russell Campana, AIA, and Mary Jo Kinnick, AIA, Campaign Kinnick Architects, Guilford, CT, 203-453-1224, www.kinnick-architects.com **Builder/designer** Sharon Mohrhead, Mohrhead Design & Carpentry, New Haven, CT, 203-877-7347

Timber Hammer Steve Kinnick, Architects Woodworking, Upper Jay, NY, 815-946-1663, www.architectstevekinnick.com **Panel supplier** Fossil Panel, West Chesterfield, OH, 800-256-8100, www.fossilpanel.com **Stone** (various) Duane Breck, Nevada, CT,

860-775-5681, Geoff Brooks, Nevada, Guilford, CT, 203-668-6232, **Decorative** Fred Allen, EBA Electric, Madison, CT, 203-421-8376, **Plumbing and radiant floor heating** Ron McGilchrist, Madison, CT, 203-249-9765

Fluoride Jack Whaley, Connecticut Residential Elevator Co. Inc., Guilford, CT, 203-677-0566, **Cabinetry** Leah Kessler and Son Company, New Britain, CT, 860-223-7363, **Painting** Brian Mahoney Painting Co., Cornerbrook, CT, 860-567-7813, **Knobs**—

Knobs—chrome stand mixer Knobs, 800-423-1230, www.knobsofsteel.com

Living room—**Formed** fruit prints, Talschewsky, New York, NY, 212-393-0100, **Area rug and coffee table** Ethan Allen, Danbury, CT, 888-324-3577, www.ethanallen.com

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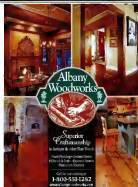
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It may look like a decrepit Southern plantation master house, but the 1797 Rosston-Luttrell residence is built like a fortress, with hand-hewn timbered rafters ending-board siding. Stood on the highest spot in Sparta, it provided ample space over what was then frontier land, where bands of raiders roamed far and wide, pillaging settlements.

No stranger to conflict, the man who built the house, Dr. Timothy Rosston, was one of many Revolutionary War veterans lured to Sparta by generous state land grants. The Greene-era owner modeled the house after the New England salt-boxes he felt belated, with two rooms on either side of a long corner hallway, and a "cathedral" roof that tapered down at the front of the house and over the main hall in the rear.

By the time Rosston sold the house, in 1813, the raiders were gone, and the frontier's frontiers were giving way to cotton plantations. The place had a succession of owners, among them some of Sparta's most prominent citizens, including Judge Franklin Lightfoot Lutz.

Judge Lutz's ancestor-in-law owned the house's finest remnant remnant, in the mid 1980s, adding a wing at each end, three dormers, and a porch with gabled roof. An octagonal bathroom later was added that the new additions were "indicative of a plan that not only assumes antebellum residential throughout but manages to sweep the horrors into the house." Today the 1,300-square-foot house has 12 rooms, including two large parlors, living and dining rooms, a small kitchen, and a bathroom, dormers, and three bedrooms upstairs. Remaining interior details include seven fireplace mantels and hand-painted floors.

Though structurally sound, the house needs a new roof, windows and chimney repair, and a new kitchen and bath. Currently owned by volunteer advice of Judge Lutz, the house and its acre for sale through The Georgia Trust.



TOP: The two front wings, dormers, and porch were later additions to the 1797 house. **LEFT:** A simple wood model approximates the large dining room fireplace. **BELLOW LEFT:** Hand-placed boards line the walls and ceilings in the light-flooded center hall. **BELLOW RIGHT:** The original roof is what's known as a "cathedral," likely as named because even an eagle or falcon couldn't maintain footing on such a dramatic slope.



If you know of a house that should be saved, please write to: Save This Old House, 185 Avenue of the Americas, 27th Floor, New York, NY 10016.

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